Identity Formation and Community Solidarity:

Second Temple historiographies in discourse with (South) African theologies of reconstruction.

by

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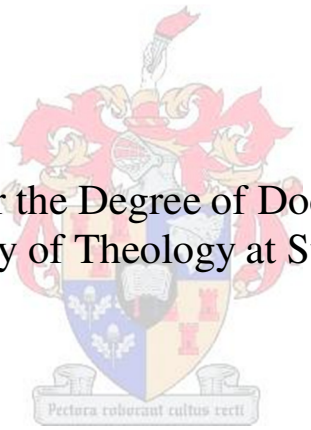

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Declaration

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Abstract

This study is motivated by a call by some African theologians for an African theology of reconstruction, specifically Mugambi. Its intended contribution is to propose a biblical paradigm from the Old Testament for an African theology of reconstruction. The study is fully convinced that a successful reconstruction process in Africa is possible if the process of identity formation is recognised as a strongly influential force on the process. The identity formation process needs to be consciously driven into a particular direction.

The study identifies two factors that influence the success or failure of a reconstruction process. The two factors, which are conversely related, are community solidarity and social conflict. Community solidarity facilitates reconstruction and social conflict retards it. As far as the study is concerned, both of these factors are products of identity formation. If an identity formation process is exclusive it results in social conflict and if it is inclusive it results in community solidarity. The unfortunate part, according to the study, in any newly liberated nation, is that identity formation is inevitable.

Because the Judean community of the Second Temple was a newly liberated community, the study suggests an exploration of their identity formation process. Although the contexts might not be the same, the suggestion is based on the hope that some lessons which can be of value to the African identity formation process might be learnt. The different ideologies that endeavoured to direct the identity formation of that community can potentially inform us of important issues to take note of when engaging in an identity formation process.

Amongst the diverse historiographies of the Second Temple period, the study will explore two historiographies, namely, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. There are two reasons why these particular historiographies are chosen. The first one is that Nehemiah has already been proposed by some scholars as a biblical paradigm for a theology of reconstruction. The second one is that Chronicles, in many respects is related to Nehemiah and therefore provides a suitable comparison for a research study of this nature.

Opsomming

Hierdie study word gemotiveer deur ‘n oproep deur sommige Afrika-teoloë tot ‘n Afrika-teologie van rekonstruksie, veral deur Mugambi. Die bydrae wat die studie wil maak is om ‘n bybelse paradigma vanuit die Ou Testament vir ‘n Afrika-teologie van rekonstruksie voor te stel. Die studie is oortuig daarvan dat ‘n suksesvolle rekonstruksie in Afrika moontlik is as die proses van identiteitsvorming erken word as ‘n sterk-beïnvloedende krag in hierdie rekonstruksie. Die identiteitsvormingsproses moet doelbewus in ‘n bepaalde rigting gestuur word.

Hierdie studie identifiseer twee faktore wat bepalend is vir die sukses al dan nie van die rekonstruksieproses. Die twee faktore wat oneweredig aan mekaar verwant is, is gemeenskapsolidariteit en sosiale konflik. Gemeenskapsolidariteit fasiliteer rekonstruksie, terwyl sosiale konflik dit vertraag. Hierdie studie aanvaar dat beide hierdie faktore produkte van ‘n identiteitsvormingsproses is. As ‘n identiteitsvormingsproses eksklusief funksioneer, lei dit tot sosiale konflik, maar as dit inklusief is, is die resultaat gemeenskapsolidariteit. Die ongelukkige deel hiervan, volgens hierdie studie, is dat identiteitsvorming in ‘n nuut-bevryde nasie onafwendbaar is.

Aangesien die Judese gemeenskap van die Tweede Tempelperiode ‘n nuutbevryde gemeenskap was, stel hierdie study voor dat ‘n verkenning van hul identiteitsvormingsprosesse gemaak moet word. Hoewel die onderskeie kontekste nie dieselfde mag wees nie, word hierdie voorstel gemaak vanuit die hoop dat ‘n aantal lesse geleer kan word wat van waarde mag wees vir die Afrika identiteitsvormingsprosesse. Die verskillende ideologieë wat invloedryk was in die identeitsvormingsprosesse van daardie gemeenskap kan ons potensieel bewus maak van belangrike kwessies waaraan aandag gegee moet word in ‘n identiteitsvormingsproses.

In die konteks van die diverse historiografieë van die Tweede Tempelpreiode sal twee historiografieë verken word, naamlik Esra-Nehemia en Kronieke. Daar is twee redes waarom hierdie spesifieke historiografieë gekies is. Die eerste is dat Nehemia alreeds voorheen voorgestel is as ‘n moontlike bybelse paradigma vir ‘n teologie van rekonstruksie. Die tweede is dat Kronieke in vele opsigte aan Nehemia verwant is en juis daarom ‘n gepaste vergelykingsbron is in ‘n navorsingstudie soos hierdie.

Dedication

In loving memory of my beloved and loving mother, Nonkohlakalo “Baby” Betty Cezula, who gracefully started her long walk to freedom on the 7th of February 2012.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABD - Anchor Bible Dictionary

ADB - African Development Bank

ANC - African National Congress

ANE - Ancient Near East

DH - Deuteronomistic History

DRA - The Douay-Rheims American Edition (1899)

EM - Ezra Memoir

EN - Ezra-Nehemiah

LBH - Late Biblical Hebrew

LXE - LXX English Translation (Brenton)

NIV - New International Version

NJB - New Jerusalem Bible

NM - Nehemiah Memoir

NRSV - New Revised Standard Version (1989)

OTE - Old Testament Essays

PI - Personal Identity

SACP - South African Communist Party

SCT - Social Covariation Theory

SI - Social Identity

SIT - Social Identity Theory

SRT - Social Representations Theory

USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WW II - World War II

YLT - Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Introduction

1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to the research study. The introduction begins by framing the problem or research goal. It will proceed to define and explain key concepts. Next will be an outline of the hypothesis and presuppositions. A description of the research design and methodology will follow and in turn be followed by the limitations of the study. It will then conclude by outlining the structure of the study.

2 Framing the Problem (Research Goal)

The first South African non-racial general elections of 27 April 1994 marked a new epoch in the history of South Africa and Africa in general. South Africa joined other African nations in their already long journey of reconstruction after attaining political liberation. South Africa had to kick-start processes of reconciliation, reform, reconstruction, redress and transformation to undo the harms that oppression, racism, conflict and instability did to her. Ever since, quite drastic gains have been made. For example, universal suffrage, a Bill of Human Rights and the constitution in general are great achievements. They provide infrastructure that can be used to facilitate reconstruction. There are also basic material benefits like cheap housing for the poor, equal social security grants for all races, government loans for tertiary education, etc. However, translating political liberation into a socially and economically just and fair socio-economic system is a great challenge. At the moment (eighteen years down the line) social ills like poverty, crime, corruption, HIV/AIDS, to count a few, continue to plague the South African society[1]. These are social ills that will, if not

[1] According to the African Development Bank (ADB) review of the Republic of South Africa (2009): "South Africa faces a number of economic, social and environmental challenges including the vulnerability to external shocks due to the global economic crisis, high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, low levels of domestic savings and large current account deficits, emerging infrastructural deficiency, growing unemployment and skills shortage, slow pace of service delivery, as well as high crime rate and the need to intensify fight against corruption" (2009:8). Referring to the UN 2008 Human Development Report, whose data is for 2006, the African Development Bank review reported that more than 25% of the population lives on less than $1.25 per day. On unemployment in 2009, the review reported as follows: "The high level of unemployment (officially estimated at 23.6% in June 2009) is a major contributing factor to poverty. Unemployment is highest amongst the black population at 27.7% compared to 4.6% amongst the white population" (2009:2). "The country has a high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 18.8% in adults aged 15 to 49 years, representing some 5.2 million people, of which about 59% are women" continues the review (2009:2). Recently, the *South Africa Yearbook* 2011/2012 admits that "poverty and inequality remain the biggest challenge (2012: 446). However, despite the ills, the *South Africa Yearbook* reports some decline as compared to the reports by the African Development Bank review. According to the Yearbook; "The estimated overall HIV prevalence rate was about 10, 6%" (2012: 278). It also reports decrease in crime (2012:385). Nevertheless, according to the Yearbook, in June 2011, Minister

dealt with satisfactorily, in the long run undermine the liberation that has been hard earned. These social ills prove that reconstructing a newly liberated nation is not an easy phenomenon.

The aforementioned challenge does not necessarily have to be a heavy burden on the politicians alone. All stakeholders in society, including theologians, have a responsibility to contribute in their own and unique ways in the reconstruction of the nation and the continent. It is against this background that the present study then accepts the challenge posed by Mugambi (1995, 1997, 1999, and 2003) who, as one prominent example, calls for a theology of reconstruction[2]. In his painstaking endeavours to elaborate on a theology of reconstruction, Mugambi concludes by saying that he highlighted only its core but not its details so "each of us is challenged to add his or her brick towards the rebuilding of the Wall of Africa, then towards the rebuilding of our societies now in ruins" (2003: 176). This study therefore wants to add its brick by contributing some details into the ongoing discourse on a theology of reconstruction by asking the following research question: **What biblical paradigm would be appropriate to consider in a theology of reconstruction?**

However, there are some key concepts that need first to be explained.

3 Concepts and Terminology

This study wants to contribute by proposing a biblical paradigm for a theology of reconstruction in (South) Africa. Before doing that though, there are key concepts that need to be clearly explained because this study is fully convinced that these concepts are integrally intertwined with a reconstruction process of a newly liberated nation.This section of the chapter examines therefore the key concepts to give a clearer understanding of their use in this study. The concepts are identity formation, exclusivity/inclusivity, community solidarity/social conflict and ideology and paradigm.

3.1 Identity formation

In introducing this part of the discussion, it is very important to indicate that identity is a condition whose role in world conflicts and instabilities cannot be underrated. Throughout history there had been gruesome reports of atrocities resulting from religious wars (e.g.

Manuel released the National Planning Commission's *Diagnostic Document* and *Draft Vision Statement for 2030*, as a basis of national dialogue among all South Africans. The public engagement process ended in September 2011. While the diagnostic report acknowledged the progress made in the transition from an apartheid state to a democratic one, the report also concluded that more meaningful and rapid progress was needed to reduce poverty and achieve equality, and identified nine challenges, one of which is corruption that "undermines state legitimacy and service delivery" (2012:251-252).

[2] Mugambi's call is echoed in Villa-Vicencio's (1992) book, *A Theology of Reconstruction: Nation-building and Human Rights.*

Hindus vs. Christians in India), racial conflicts (e.g. whites vs. blacks in South Africa), ethnic civil wars (e.g. Tutsis vs. Hutus in Rwanda), to name a few. It is against this background that this study regards identity as a force to reckon with. In a world that has become very much conscious of human rights and human dignity, identity is regarded by this study as a significant factor to be concerned about. The discourse on identity formation in this study has been greatly influenced by the above-mentioned circumstances. The main intention of this section, however, is to explain identity formation as perceived by this study.

By identity formation the study, first and foremost, refers to a phenomenon that is fluid and kinetic in nature; not static and stationery. As much as the core of identity formation is identity, the study avoids giving an impression that identity is a given, original and "uncontaminated" condition, hence identity formation. Identity adapts to new circumstances and therefore evolves with the consequence that it is continually in a state of formation. Identity borders may be narrowed or widened as the circumstances demand. They shift in response to the circumstances of the present context.

Identity formation in this study is discussed in relation to other phenomena and only makes sense in relation thereto. These phenomena are community solidarity/social conflict on the one hand and reconstruction on the other. Community solidarity and social conflict will be discussed separately below but reference to them will be made where necessary as they are also somehow inextricable from identity formation. Reconstruction has already been mentioned in the section on the research goal.

Identity formation can take any of two primary forms, namely, exclusive or inclusive. Each form of identity formation determines the state of a reconstruction process to result from it. In other words, there is a correlation between a form of identity formation and a state of a reconstruction process. This correlation is useful because it indicates a predictive relationship that can be monitored and guided to safeguard expected results. One form is an exclusive identity formation process while the other is an inclusive one. An exclusive identity formation process is highly likely to retard a reconstruction process while an inclusive identity formation process is highly likely to facilitate a reconstruction process. This assertion will be further developed below when the discussion is on community solidarity/social conflict. For the time being, the discussion will move on to further explain exclusivity and inclusivity.

3.2 Exclusivity/Inclusivity

The discussion on the process of identity formation has been done with reference to exclusivity and inclusivity in the previous subsection. For this reason, it is significant to clarify what is exactly meant by these two concepts, namely, exclusivity/inclusivity. Before discussing them, it is important to emphasise the fact that these two concepts are each other's antitheses.

Let us start by defining and explaining exclusivism and thereafter inclusivism. Exclusivism, as understood in this study, is a social phenomenon that entails separative group consciousness and uses identity as an impenetrable social border to sustain separation from other groups within a broader population. It can be any identity mode: religion, race, class, ethnicity etc. In addition to this definition, the study has two more points to make to further explain exclusivism. The first point is about history and the second one about social position.

The point of departure when bringing in history into this discussion is to relate to Jonker's (2010) response to Hermann Giliomee and Bernard Mbenga's claim that they have striven for objectivity in presenting the South African history afresh. Jonker is sceptical about historiography being ever objective. His argument is: "Revisionist histories are the products of interaction between socio-historical circumstances and the interests pursued in those circumstances" (2010:66). The study finds merit in this assertion and it is also relevant for our discussion of exclusivism. In the definition it was stated that exclusivism uses identity to draw a social border that secludes them from the rest. To reinforce the bond among those inside the social border, retelling of history and reinterpretation of the social environment[3] are strong tools to be used. Retelling of history and reinterpretation of the social environment is done in accordance with the interests of the group in their present socio-historical circumstances. In other words, historical information and information about the social environment is intentionally presented to the readership/audience so that the readership/audience feels obliged to strongly support the interests of the group. In short, this is done to influence the insiders' thought and behavior patterns. These actions are not without a motive behind them. Social position is a motive behind such endeavors and is discussed below.

The social position of the group within the broader population is the prime motive. In addition to reinforcing the bond among the insiders, retelling of history and reinterpretation

[3] This can take place literarily or orally, as the circumstances allow.

of the social environment also serve a motive of securing a particular social position within the wider population. Usually, the group tends to claim, in explicit or implicit expressions, a privileged position within a defined population. Different tactics are used to secure this position, even if it means to undermine everyone else but the insiders. Discrimination and intolerance usually become central features of the group whether covertly or overtly, depending on the circumstances.

Inclusivism on the other hand implants a different attitude among the different groups of society. It is defined as a social phenomenon characterized by consciousness of coexistence among various identity groups within a defined population and commitment to the good of the broader population. Concerning inclusivity, there are two things that can be added to explain it, namely, openness and common humanity.

If exclusivism is described as producing closed identity groups, inclusivism produces open identity groups. The social borders are penetrable. An encounter with the other is not perceived as a threat but rather an opportunity for mutual enrichment for the benefit of all. Inclusivism acknowledges the dynamism of identity groups; that they influence their social environment and in turn are influenced by the social environment and therefore do not remain the same. Exclusivism tends to be hypocritical in this regard. Exclusivist identity groups are likely to defend their discriminatory tendencies by claiming to protect some purity and originality while reality proves that no social group remains pure and original for its entire history. For inclusivism coexistence does not necessarily have to be an uneasy or impossible situation.

Openness, on the other hand, is based on the idea of common humanity. Common humanity is a worldview that all human beings belong to one big family and therefore all have dignity. This kind of thinking in Christian circles is based on the creation story in Genesis 1 and reinforced by the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1. Inclusivism, through the idea of common humanity recognizes the differences that exist among many identity groups of humankind while at the same time acknowledging the similarities that oblige all human beings to honor the human dignity of those who are different from them. The essence of this worldview is perfectly encapsulated in Luke 6:31 that says: “Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Also cf. Matthew 7:12). Inclusivity might not necessarily operate at the level of Luke 6:31, nevertheless, the recognition of the idea of common humanity as a basis for the relationships of different identity groups is reason to be optimistic. The long-term goal is to

attain human dignity for all. Discussing common humanity in the preface of his book, *A Common Humanity: Thinking about Love and Truth and Justice*, Gaita (2002) defines common humanity as follows:

> ...it is with the ways human beings are invisible, or only partially invisible, to one another, with how that effects and is effected by an understanding of morality. No one, of course, means that poor people are literally invisible to wealthy people or black people to white people. When we spell out what we mean, we often say that some human beings are invisible to the moral faculties of their fellows (2002: xx).

Elaborating further and in the process perfectly uncovering the contents of the concept of inclusivity, Gaita says:

> Treat me as a human being, fully as your equal, without condescension – that demand (or plea), whether it is made by women to men or by blacks to whites, is a demand for justice. Not, however, for justice conceived as equal access to goods and opportunities. It is for justice conceived as equality of respect. Only when one's humanity is fully visible will one be treated as someone who can intelligibly press claims to equal access to goods and opportunities. Victims of racial or other forms of radical denigration, who are quite literally treated as less than fully human, would be ridiculed if they were to do it. The struggle for social justice, I argue, is the struggle to make our institutions reveal rather than obscure, and then enhance rather than diminish, the full humanity of our fellow citizens (2002: xx-xxi).

Having defined and explained both exclusivity and inclusivity as they are understood in this study, the discussion proceeds to the next step of our discussion to explicate community solidarity/social conflict.

3.3 Community solidary/Social conflict

The two concepts; community solidarity and social conflict, are expressed deliberately in a particularized terminology. The noun c*ommunity* could have been used appositionally to both solidarity and conflict to read as community solidarity and community conflict. In turn, the adjective *social* could also have been used predicatively for both nouns to read social solidarity or social conflict. However, the study uses this terminology to propound certain thought and behavior patterns. This will become clearer later in the discussion. At this juncture, the study wants to reveal a distinction it makes between the noun community and the adjective social that justifies the use of this distinct terminology. The contrast between community and society was "made world-famous by the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies in his classic *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (first published in 1887)…" (Kamenka 1982: viii). Referring to the concepts of community and society, Tönnies (1955) says:

> ...to date in scientific terminology they have been customarily confused and used at random without any distinction. For this reason, a few introductory remarks may explain the inherent contrast between these two concepts. All intimate, private, and exclusive living together, so we discover, is understood as life in Gemeinschaft (community). Gesellschaft (society) is public life – it is the world itself. In Gemeinschaft (community) with one's family, one lives from birth on bound to it in weal and woe. One goes into Gesellschaft (society) as one goes into a strange country. A young man is warned against bad Gesellschaft (society), but the expression bad Gemeinschaft (community) violates the meaning of the word (1955:37-38).

What is most striking for this study in Tönnies' distinction are the characters of relationships that he associates with community and society, namely, intimacy and strangeness, respectively. This is a distinction that the present study makes between the two concepts when using the terminology of community solidarity and social conflict. Intimacy is well compatible with solidarity while conflict is more likely in the context of strangeness. According to Kamenka (1982), another student of Community wrote that concepts in the social sciences are part of human assessments and concerns which are used in contexts of doubt, conflict and hope and are used as means to select out of the confusion and multiplicity of events the characteristics and elements which are related to the purposes and interests of their users (1982: viii). The selection of this terminology is no exception. Its use is meant to promote friendliness and discourage estrangement among different groups as it was stated above that the study uses this terminology to propound certain thought and behavior patterns. Community solidarity is viewed as a positive thing and social conflict as a negative thing. The intention is to illuminate the distinction the study makes between community and social. It should also illuminate the connotations the study attaches to the terminology of community solidarity and social conflict through the use of community and social. This should suffice to allow us to proceed to the explanation of further key concepts.

3.4 Ideology and Paradigm

The understanding of the concept ideology in this study is derived from Jonathan E Dyck's (1998) description thereof. Dyck describes it as "ideas or language with a particular social force" (1998:1). The phrase "a particular social force" is the emphasis of this definition. He strongly contends that in an ideology there is a relationship between the ideas and the socio-historical context in which the bearer of the ideas works. Therefore, this study defines ideology as a set of ideas held by a particular group or person in a particular socio-historical setting to mould and shape the community into a particular direction. It may defend and strengthen an existing system (status quo) or strive to bring about a new system (change).

Specifically, the study is interested in the ethnic ideology of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. Referring to the ideas of the Chronicler[4], Dyck (1998) labels them as theocratic because for the Chronicler religion and politics are not two spheres but one (1998:1). The study extends that label to the ideas of Ezra-Nehemiah as well. As the case is with Chronicles, in Ezra-Nehemiah also, politics and religion constitute one sphere. Both books therefore carry a theocratic ideology. Because the centrality of theocracy is God, the theocratic ideologies of these two books focus on God and His will, which renders them theological as well. For this reason, ideology and theology are used exchangeably in this study.

Related to ideology/theology is the concept paradigm. CJH Wright (1983) has this to say about a paradigm: "Indeed, I would regard 'paradigm' as a useful category for ethically understanding and applying the Old Testament itself" (1983:43). For Wright (1983) "a paradigm is something used as a model or example for other cases where a basic principle remains unchanged, though details differ" (1983:43). In an article, Wright (1992) puts flesh to the skeleton when he says:

> … we can see that the law was designed (along with many other aspects of Israel's historical experience) to mould and shape Israel in certain clearly defined directions, within their own historico-cultural context. That overall social shape, with its legal and institutional structures, ethical norms and values and theological undergirding, thus becomes the model or paradigm intended to have a relevance and application beyond the geographical, historical and cultural borders of Israel itself. The particularity of Israel then becomes not a hindrance to universal application, but serves it (1992:227-228).

The summation that *the overall social shape becomes the model or paradigm beyond the geographical, historical and cultural borders of Israel* sets the tone for further discussion. Previously, Wright (1992) mentioned Exodus 19:1-6 which is helpful for the ensuing argument (1983:40, 1992:227). According to Exodus 19:5-6,[5] God made (literally: cut) a covenant with Israel to which obedience or disobedience would determine the status of God's relationship with Israel. This covenant became the basis of the worldview of the Israelites. Israel therefore, had to reflect this worldview in their community life. This challenged creative people to coin up sets of ideas that would mould and shape Israel in a desired and clearly defined direction. In such circumstances ideology/theology becomes relevant. For

[4] Chronicler is the name given to the author/s of Chronicles because he/they is/are unknown.

[5] [5] Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, [6] but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites" (Exodus 19:5-6).

example, after exile the social landscape had radically changed for the returned exiles so that ethnicity was a burning theological question. The Israelite community had to come up with an ethnic ideology that would mould and shape Israel in accordance with the covenant. Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles were written within a context of that nature. The ethnic ideologies/theologies that emerged could later also become paradigms beyond the geographical, historical and cultural borders of Second Temple Israel.

The discussion has so far focused on ideas as a paradigm. However, the ideas can be conveyed through the characters in a narrative as well. The character who becomes a protagonist in a narrative and an agent through which the author conveys his/her ideas may also become an incarnation of that idea.[6] The theme of liberation in the exodus story, for example, is so attached to Moses that he became an incarnation of liberation, hence a paradigm for liberation theology. Mugambi argues that "every African nation had its 'Moses'" (1999: Foreword). In Nehemiah, Mugambi sees a paradigm for reconstruction (2003:172-173). Likewise, an author of a biblical book can be a paradigm figure of some aspects of his/her writing. An author like the Chronicler, for example, can be a paradigm of his own ideas to other geographical, historical and cultural contexts beyond his/hers.

This section explained key concepts because they have an important bearing on the discussion on reconstruction. Having done that, the next important step is to outline the hypothesis and presuppositions of this study.

4 Hypothesis and Presuppositions

With key concepts explained in the previous section, this section outlines the hypothesis and presuppositions. This study hypothesises that exclusive identity formation retards reconstruction and inclusive identity formation facilitates reconstruction. Testing of this hypothesis is foundational for proposing a biblical paradigm for reconstruction in (South) Africa because the results will provide the basis of the proposal of a biblical paradigm. So, this study has a responsibility to test and prove this hypothesis, and on the basis of the results, propose a biblical paradigm for reconstruction in (South) Africa.

[6] Janzen (1994), however, has reservations about persons who are characterized as comprehensive models. His argument is: "That is precisely where our understanding of the Old Testament's ethical message fails us so often in our childhood. We make saints out of biblical characters, only to experience later that these saints come crashing down. Instead, we have looked at stories of persons who are exemplary in certain very specific actions and who are held up to us as models only with respect to these actions " (1994:20).

In addition, the study presupposes that exclusive identity formation process is highly likely to result in social conflict and inclusive identity formation is highly likely to result in community solidarity. In order to propose any biblical book as a paradigm for reconstruction, it therefore will have to be established what mode of identity formation is reflected in that particular book. This will form the lense through which the books Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles will be investigated.

The outline of the research so far has only answered the what-question. Now a further step needs to be taken by dealing with the how-question. This will be done by outlining the design and the methodology of the research study.

5 Research Design and Methodology

This study will do content analysis for the purpose of discovering the underlying meanings and patterns of behaviour in order to understand human behaviour. This will be done by exploring some Second Temple biblical historiographies .The reason to choose the Second Temple period is that it was a period of reconstruction for the returned exiles from Babylon to the province of Judah within the Persian Empire.

Two biblical books, in particular, will be explored for this purpose[7]. Since Mugambi has already suggested Nehemiah as a possible biblical paradigm for a theology of reconstruction, Nehemiah becomes an integral part of this research. For that reason, the book Ezra-Nehemiah is one of the books to be explored. The other book is Chronicles because, like Nehemiah, it is also a Second Temple biblical book. Moreover, while the books share more or less the same time setting, they seem to contain different theologies and thereby provide a conducive condition for a research project of this nature. Lastly, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles share commonalities which, when taken at face value, seem to render the books compatible. However, when scrutinised, they turn out to be theological extremes.[8] This is very significant for the plot of this study.

The study is going to observe how the books of Ezra-Nehemiah on the one hand, and Chronicles on the other responded to the challenge of identity formation in the Second

[7]According to Grabbe (2004: 70-106), we can never expect agreement on the exact list of the biblical books which are Persian in origin or substantial composition. However, he considers some of the books would be accepted by a reasonable number of Old Testament scholars as such. They are Ezra-Nehemiah; Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi; other Prophetic Writings (the Isaiah Tradition, Joel, Jonah and Ezekiel); Chronicles, the P document (Pentateuch) and the Writings (Proverbs, Job, Esther, Ruth and Song of Songs).

[8] This will become specific in chapter three.

Temple period, which is the context within which reconstruction took place. The focus will particularly be on how the temple and the concept of "all-Israel" function in this literature. These two *foci* will be examined as to how they were used in the respective books so that they would influence the process of identity formation. In other words, were they used to exclude or include the "other" so that the identity process that was unfolding became exclusive or inclusive respectively? This study will show that Ezra-Nehemiah contains an exclusive ethnic theology/ideology and Chronicles an inclusive one.

The methodology is multi-disciplinary. This study will utilise some insights from social psychology, social anthropology and African ethics while it is itself a biblical-theological study. On identity formation, theories of social psychologists Henry Tajfel and Jean-Claude Deschamps will be used. Because identity is a broad concept,[9] it needs to be delimited for the sake of this study's practicality. Ethnicity or ethnic identity formation therefore is the mode of identity the study will concentrate on although the overall argument is applicable to any mode of identity. The social anthropologist Frederik Barth's ethnic theory will be another methodological tool to advance the study's arguments. On community solidarity the study will be aided by the insights from the African ethic of *Ubuntu.* Having outlined the design and methodology, the study also has its limits as will be described below.

6 Limitations of the study

Despite its strong ambition, this study cannot claim ingenuity to the problems that are endemic to the reconstruction process of (South) Africa. The reconstruction process of (South) Africa is faced with diverse challenges that are impossible to exhaust in this one study. The sources of retardation of the (South) African process of reconstruction are not only internal but also external. Some global social, economic and developmental trends that are becoming part of (South) Africa's way of doing things are not necessarily compatible with the social matrix that moulds the (South) African thought and behaviour patterns. Mugambi (2003) tells of the woes of Africa during the Cold War and beyond the Cold War saying:

> However, the end of the cold war did not bring relief to Africa but rather a new situation with which the African elite had to deal. Under one reigning ideology and a global market economy controlled by a few trans-national corporations, African states became weak and dominated by competitors in the world economy (Mugambi 2003:162).

[9]It can refer to national, class, racial, religious or ethnic identity, for example.

The external factors also deserve some attention when addressing the issue of reconstruction in (South) Africa. Because this study focuses internally, the external factors are a subject for another study. Even in its internal focus, this study contributes from a biblical-theological point of view. Although other disciplines are consulted for helpful insights the study remains a biblical-theological study and therefore contributes from one tiny corner. Nevertheless, there is no reason to despair, for an aggregate of positively critical contributions from different angles on the subject of (South) African reconstruction should create a useful infrastructure of ideas for nudging the process towards the envisaged direction.

Another limitation to the study is the extent to which it can use the biblical books chosen for this research. Ezra-Nehemiah is narrating what happened during the early Persian era. Chronicles on the other hand is telling, from the context of the late Persian era, what happened during the pre-exilic era. This difference between the books poses a challenge to the present research. A further challenge is that the study cannot extract the exact picture of the on-goings of the Persian era because the biblical books chosen present only what their authors presented and not necessarily an objective narration of the events. This situation is illuminated in Jonker's (2008) statement when he says:

> Many studies have already been devoted to a description of Jewish society in the Persian province of Yehud. It has been rightly pointed out that one cannot merely use biblical records such as Chronicles to "read off" how this flesh-and-blood society looked like. However, it has been emphasized equally that historical books such as Chronicles reflect something of the self-understanding of this community. Although this self-understanding does not necessarily coincide with the flesh-and-blood society of that time, it nevertheless gives us a good impression of the processes of self-identification within the Yehudite community (2008:1).

While the books give a hint on the Persian era, one cannot claim to be dealing with material that gives exactly the conditions of the time. The last subsection presented here provides an outline of the study that is to follow.

7 Structure of the study

The first chapter will introduce reconstruction theology in (South) Africa. Different views of different scholars on the subject will be presented, particularly of Villa-Vicencio and Mugambi. Different responses to the call will also be examined. Specifically, the perceptions of Farisani, Vellem and Maluleke will be presented.

The second chapter will discuss the methodological tools to be utilised in this research. Since identity formation is important for this study, social identity as a social psychological subject will be discussed from the lenses of Henry Tajfel's social identity theory and Jean-Claude Deschamps' social covariation theory. Community solidarity will also be discussed with the help of the insights of *Ubuntu* philosophy. Because identity is broad, it will then be delimited to ethnicity and Frederik Barth's "transactionalist" theory of ethnicity will be discussed as a helpful tool to examine ethnicity. Lastly, the chapter will show the importance of the temple and the concept of all-Israel in Second Temple historiographies as they are the focus in the examination of the relevant biblical books.

The third chapter will provide an overview of the Second Temple historical background as presented in the Second Temple historiographies. This is to place the province of Judah within the broader context of the Persian Empire. This will help to understand why some things happened the way they did and thereby make the reading of the relevant Second Temple biblical corpuses less confusing. The chapter will proceed to other introductory issues concerning Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. This will include issues such as unity of the books, dating, authorship and other basic issues related to the relevant questions. These issues are important to investigate, not only for the sake of thorough exegesis but also because they relate so closely to the issues of identity formation and community solidarity which are important for this study.

The fourth chapter discusses socio-historical conditions that might have influenced the authors/editors of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. The historical overview in chapter three concerns the general affairs of the Persian Empire. In this chapter the internal affairs unique to the province of Judah will be presented. The chapter explores different contributions by different scholars in their attempt to reconstruct the socio-historical conditions that may have influenced the thought-patterns of the Second Temple Judean community. Describing the conditions of the time, Williamson (1982) assertively states that there is evidence of considerable disagreement at that time concerning how "open" or "exclusive" a stance should be taken to those outside the confines of the group centred on Jerusalem" (Williamson: 1982: 24).

The fifth and sixth chapters will particularly focus on Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. The chapters will show that Ezra-Nehemiah contains an exclusive ethnic theology/ideology and

Chronicles contains an inclusive ethnic theology/ideology. In these chapters the contents of the books will be outlined. Thereafter the use of the concepts of "all-Israel" and the temple will be investigated in order to establish whether they contribute towards exclusivism or inclusivism. Lastly, a conclusion is reached concerning each book, paving the way for the discussion in chapter seven.

Chapter seven integrates the deliberations of chapter five and chapter six. In this chapter the discussion will start by resuming the argument on *identity formation and community solidarity*. It moves on to examine the reconstruction of worship during the Second Temple period in the province of Yehud. Under this discussion there are sub-sections on Ezra-Nehemiah on the one hand and Chronicles on the other. The same format will be followed in the next section which discusses the reconstruction of the community. A comparison of the above-mentioned phenomena as they occur in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles will follow. The chapter concludes by revealing its preference between the two approaches to identity formation in Ezra-Nehemiah on the one hand and Chronicles on the other; a step leading to the proposal of a possible candidate for a biblical paradigm for reconstruction in (South) Africa in the following chapter.

The eighth and last chapter comprises of conclusions made from the research study. It will condense all the seven chapters into one consolidated argument. It will conclude by proposing a biblical paradigm for a theology of reconstruction in (South) Africa based on the findings of the observations of behaviour patterns in the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles aided by the methodological tools mentioned above.

Chapter One

Reconstruction Theology in (South) Africa

1 Introduction

As the introductory chapter has already indicated, this study is motivated by a discourse on African theology of reconstruction in (South) Africa. This chapter will examine different contributions into the discourse. The discussion will start by looking at different views concerning a theology of reconstruction and its biblical paradigm as presented by Charles Villa-Vicencio and Jesse Ndwiga Kanyua Mugambi. The study will then explore the reception of the proposal for an African theology of reconstruction. The views of Elelwani Bethuell Farisani, Vuyani S Vellem and Tinyiko Sam Maluleke will be examined in this regard. The conclusion will sum up the discussion.

2 Reconstruction Theology and its biblical paradigm

Villa-Vicencio is the first to be discussed, followed by Mugambi. The study follows this order not because Villa-Vicencio came with the idea first, in fact, it needs to be noted that Mugambi is the first to canvass the idea of reconstruction theology (Farisani 2002:63; Vellem 2007:130). Villa-Vicencio's book was published first though.

2.1 Villa-Vicencio

The opening sentence of Villa-Vicencio's (1992) introduction to his book; *A Theology of Reconstruction: Nation-building and Human rights*, goes as follows; "[W]inds of change are blowing across large sections of the globe, with the political crises in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and South Africa presenting a new challenge for theology" (1992:1). Villa-Vicencio's book was published in 1992 and the foregoing statement is a reference to the signs of decline to two phenomena that had held the world's attention since the 1950s, namely, the socialist systems of governance in Eastern Europe and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) on the one hand and the apartheid system of governance in South Africa on the other. In these happenings, Villa-Vicencio (1992) perceived a new era of new challenges for the Christians in general and the church in particular. He is exploring the options for theology as the context changes. He indicates that "the task of liberation theologians has essentially been to say 'No' to all forms of oppression" (1992:1). He further suggests that, "as the enduring struggle for democracy in some parts of the world begins to

manifest itself in differing degrees of success", so should the prophetic task of the church include a thoughtful and creative "Yes" to options for political and social renewal (1992:1).

What attracts the attention of this study most, which also inspires it, lies in a paragraph that outlines the past and the present theological state of affairs as it says:

> The various contextual theologies that have over the years emerged from within the South African struggle have constituted an important part of resistance within this country. This same struggle, now in a decisively new phase, is contributing to further theological turmoil and renewal as the process of political reconstruction and nation-building unfolds. One consequence manifests itself in the theological quest for liberation now in the shape of a theology of nation-building, drawing on different biblical metaphors. These include the *wilderness* experience before entering the promised land, the *exile* prior to rebuilding Jerusalem and the return of the Babylonian exiles in the postexilic period (1992: 6).

He further asserts that "the kind of theology of reconstruction demanded by this challenge is in every sense a postexilic theology" (1992: 6).

Villa-Vicencio's "study is unambiguously inter-disciplinary. It is written at the nexus of theological, political, economic, philosophical and legal debate, with a focus on human rights in a struggle for the creation of a more equitable and just society. There is an implicit theology operative even within the non-theological sections of the book" (1992:3). In his book outline, Villa-Vicencio correctly justifies inter-disciplinarity by saying "theologians are notorious for answering questions that not too many other people are asking, or alternatively not appreciating the full implications of the difficult questions that are asked. The interdisciplinary nature of the study requires that theological debate be integrated into the existing debate in cognate disciplines (1992:18). Reconstruction theology, according to Villa-Vicencio, needs to concern inter-faith dialogue as well. "Because theology is required to build a nation within which people of different faiths share, on the basis of the separation of religion and state, the inter-faith dimension of theology and social renewal needs increasingly to concern Christians as much as it is required to concern people of other faiths" (1992: 277). In closure, Villa-Vicencio encourages the church to be involved in the affairs of the nation, supporting certain political and economic proposals and not supporting others. Where the circumstances demand, the church may even have to make its own proposals. In the process mistakes may be committed which may expose the church to judgement by history. Nevertheless, it would be a grave mistake if the church can avoid involvement because it fears committing mistakes.

2.2 Mugambi

The title of Mugambi's (1995) book that proposes reconstruction theology is *From Liberation Theology to Reconstruction: African Christian Theology after the Cold War*. The phrase "after the cold war" is similar to Villa-Vicencio's motivation of the implosion of the centralised political and economic systems of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Partly, like Villa-Vicencio, his theme is motivated by "the end of the cold war, colonialism and apartheid"[10] (1995: x). The purpose of the book is to offer some suggestions on new directions for Christian theological reflection in Africa (1995:2). Mugambi's argument is that "in the past, *liberation* and *inculturation* have been taken as the most basic concepts for innovative African Christian theology" (1995:2). In this book he "introduces *reconstruction* as a new paradigm for African Christian theology in the 'New World Order'" (1995:2). Like Villa-Vicencio, Mugambi proposes inter-faith and inter-disciplinary dimensions to the theology of reconstruction (1992:2). He also outlines various aspects of social reality on which the programme of reconstruction ought to focus, namely, political, economic, aesthetic, moral and theological reconstruction (1997: 4-23).

Just as Villa-Vicencio has noticed, "liberation as a theme for Christian theological reflection has been derived from the Exodus narrative in the Old Testament (1992:2). He indicates that there has been a tendency among Christian theologians to polarize themselves in support of either Liberation or Salvation. This polarization presupposes that liberation and salvation are mutually exclusive. However, Mugambi asserts that liberation and salvation are theologically complementary (1992:4). He further introduces the concepts of *acculturation* and *inculturation*. The former refers to internalization of a foreign culture either spontaneously or by force. The latter refers to the manifestation of the church in different cultures (1992:7-8). These concepts comprise another polarization. He argues that Africa has been undergoing processes of social reconstruction during the past five hundred years. Some of the changes were imposed from outside while others rose from internal pressures. The Bible is replete with illustrations of social reconstruction over a long period, he argues. Several paradigms have been proposed and utilized in the short history of African theology. They include liberation, deliverance, salvation, redemption, inculturation and incarnation models. The liberation paradigm has been attractive to some theologians in Africa because of the historical experience of colonial and neo-colonial domination. However, the transposition of the liberation theme from the Old Testament to the African experience has led to some

[10] In Villa-Vicencio, colonialism is not explicitly discussed.

distortions of the theological message contained therein. This is because there are remarkable differences between the Israelite experience under the Pharaohs, and the African colonial experience under North Atlantic powers four millennia later (1992:13-14).[11] He argues that the theme of *reconstruction* is made attractive by the fact that it highlights the necessity of creating a new society within the same geographical space, but across different historical moments. He then indicates that this theme needs further development as a Christian theological reflection in Africa (1992:15). He identifies three levels of reconstruction, namely, personal reconstruction, cultural reconstruction and ecclesial reconstruction. Mugambi addresses quite a number of topics in this book. Our interest is in the theology of reconstruction and its biblical paradigm suggested by him. In another book, *Christian theology and Social Reconstruction* (2003), Mugambi highlights social reconstruction as a precondition for effective and efficient management of all aspects of governance. He begins by hypothesising that the African cultural and religious heritage contains the foundations upon which social reconstruction should be undertaken, and that new ideas from East and West, North and South, should be accessories for the task of reconstruction which Africans themselves must do for the good of their nations and their future generations (Mugambi 1997:3; 2003:37).

He then moves on to emphasise the importance of the events of the 1990s. He posits that "the 1990s were a decade of profound political change in the world generally, and in Africa particularly. The change was not necessarily for the better, but it was profound. The magnitude of political change experienced in that decade was comparable to that of the 1960s" (Mugambi 2003:162). Thereafter he gives a very brief, but very significant outline of the mood changes as time progressed since the 1960s. This is paramount for the present generation to take into cognisance. He avers that "during the 1960s most of African nations attained sovereignty. There was much euphoria and high expectations especially amongst the younger generation. During the 1970s that optimism faded into disillusionment. The 1980s were characterised by cries of despair all over the continent" (Mugambi 2003:162). The events of the 1990s he perceives against this background. The era that was dying at the dawn of the 1990s was pervaded by the cold war. According to Mugambi, during the Cold War, Africa was torn between the super powers and their allies. Patronage and intimidation by the superpowers made it difficult for African nations to exercise their sovereignty, because they

[11] The differences are outlined as follows: Historical distance, cultural distance, religious heritage, ideological distance and religious plurality.

were viewed and treated as supporters or opponents of one or other of the reigning ideologies. Under these circumstances, liberation was an important theme for the African elite in both theology and other disciplines. The concern for liberation was understood in terms of freedom from colonial domination, racial oppression, economic exploitation, cultural imperialism and cold war manipulations. However, the end of the cold war did not bring relief to Africa but rather a new situation with which the African elite had to deal. Under one reigning ideology and a global market economy controlled by a few trans-national corporations, African states became weak and dominated by competitors in the world economy (Mugambi 2003:162). "Thus Africans became, in essence, enslaved at home", laments Mugambi. Sorrowfully expressing the misfortunes of Africa, he avers that "the last forty years of the twentieth century were difficult for African countries as they tried to fight against colonial domination, racial oppression, economic exploitation and ideological manipulation under the cold war" (Mugambi 2003:162). Coupled with all the above-mentioned problems, African states underwent re-autocratization, with the soldiers leaving the barracks and making themselves rulers on civilian thrones. "The *Theology of Reconstruction* is articulated in the context of this background of global capitalist hegemony and internal civil strife. The context is determined by the historical circumstances in which churches as social institutions and Christians as individuals have to live and express their faith" (Mugambi 2003:162). The study understands Mugambi here as saying, the foregoing description of the situation in the last forty years of the twentieth century depicts a disintegrating continent and hence the need for reconstruction. It is this background that motivates a theology of reconstruction.

To wrap up Mugambi's proposals for a theology of reconstruction, two issues need to be explained further; the fate of liberation theology and Nehemiah as a proposed biblical paradigm for a theology of reconstruction. In the Foreword to *Theology of Reconstruction: Exploratory essays*, Mugambi claims that during the 1970s he had been a pioneer in the promotion of liberation as a motif for doing contextual theology in Africa. At the time, the Exodus motif seemed appropriate and fitting. Moses was the paradigmatic role model for Africa. Every African nation had its "Moses" (1999:Foreword). He then argues that the theological metaphor of re-construction challenges African scholars to discern new insights to inspire a new movement, hopefully more vigorous than that of the 1970s – a movement that can help the people of this continent to regain their self-esteem and integrity, as they contribute towards the creation of a global community (1999:Foreword). "The *Theology of*

Liberation was formulated as dialectical discourse, which presupposed a conflict of interest between rulers and the ruled, the oppressor and the oppressed. The goal was dislodgement of the oppressor *from power*, and the accession of the oppressed *to power* after their liberation" (2003:165). The process of liberation required leaders and followers, the elite and the masses, he argues. "In contrast, a *Theology of Reconstruction* presupposes a different process, which is not adversarial but reciprocal.[12] Thus Theology of Reconstruction is not just another label for the same kind of activity. It is a challenge to do theology in a new way, with new thought forms, new presuppositions and new axioms" (2003:166). He adds that liberation is a process in which the oppressed direct their actions against the oppressors while the oppressors resist. In contrast, Social Reconstruction is a process in which all sectors of the population are invited to participate in the inauguration of a new social order (2003:166). While Mugambi argues that liberation and reconstruction are not mutually exclusive, he does not argue for co-existence either, rather for him the two are consecutive; liberation first and reconstruction follows (2003:61). In short, Mugambi reckons liberation has served its purpose and now it is time to focus on reconstruction.

Lastly, Mugambi presents the Nehemiah biblical paradigm vis-à-vis the Exodus/Moses biblical paradigm which was prominent during the liberation struggles of the previously colonized countries. According to Mugambi, the role of Nehemiah is different from that of Moses: "The leadership of Nehemiah contrasts sharply with that of Moses, just as Egypt contrasts sharply with Babylon" (2003:172-173). Nehemiah is educated and trained in Babylon. He occupies a very high office in the Palace of the king of Babylon. The people of Judah have been hoping and praying that he will use his office to come to their rescue which he does. "Nehemiah surveys the whole of Jerusalem and its environs to evaluate what needs to be done to restore its past glory. He confirms that the city is in ruins, but using his managerial skills and knowledge he prepares a report on the bill of quantities and the time required. On the fourth day he calls a meeting and announces that he has made all the necessary investigation. Jerusalem can be rebuilt with local resources only" (2003:146, 172). Nehemiah encourages and motivates the people so that he does not even need to supervise them. Moses is indispensable and thus the capacity of the people to take their own initiative is

[12] He quotes from his *From Liberation to Reconstruction* (1999) as follows: "This theology should be reconstructive rather than destructive; inclusive rather than exclusive; proactive rather than reactive; complementary rather than competitive; integrative rather than disintegrative; programme-driven rather than project-driven; people-centred rather than institution-centred, deed-oriented rather than word-oriented; participatory rather than autocratic; regenerative rather than degenerative; future-sensitive rather than past-sensitive; cooperative rather than confrontational; consultative rather than impositional" (1999:xv).

undermined. When he is not physically present things go wrong. He has to be visible to the people for his power to work and he often gets angry. “He led more by inspiration than through managerial training and skill” (2003: 146). He relies on his charismatic privilege because he is appointed by God. His leadership qualities are not derived from his own genius because he had advisers and his father-in-law, Jethro (2003:171- 172). Mugambi makes some correlation between Moses and some African leaders when he says, “Moses was more of a commander than a leader. It is interesting that the likening of the first post-colonial generation of African leaders with Moses produced a style of leadership which could not be questioned, and whose public profile was more quasi-religious than socio-political” (2003:146). Africa in the twenty first century is in a very similar situation as Judah in the days of Nehemiah, he continues: “There are many Sanballats and Tobias, in politics, in churches, in the media, in diplomatic circles and also in business. They are there in the World Bank and in the IMF, in universities and in non-governmental organisations. But there are Nehemiahs also, who are well trained and can motivate their people. There are Jeremiahs also, prophets of doom and prophets of sorrow. You can choose which profile to highlight. It seems to me that at this time in history, the figure of Nehemiah is the most encouraging and most inspiring for Africa today,” argues Mugambi (2003:173). He apologetically declares that Nehemiah was not perfect, just as there is nobody who is perfect. However, contemporary Africa can learn more from Nehemiah about the demands and challenges of leadership than from Moses, declares Mugambi. He admits that there is a strained relationship between Nehemiah and the people of the land. He qualifies this admission by revealing that in fact the real conflict was between the elites of both sides. Mugambi argues that according to the prophetic tradition, the test of righteousness was whether a leader empathised with the poor and the powerless. “Nehemiah’s stance was more in sympathy with the downtrodden than with the elite on either side of the social divide. This is the attribute that qualifies him to belong to reconstructive leadership. We are challenged to emulate this attribute, without imitating his weakness,” finalises Mugambi (2003:173).

In his conclusion, Mugambi states that he highlighted only the core of a theology of reconstruction but not its details: “Each of us is challenged to add his or her brick towards the rebuilding of the Wall of Africa, then towards the rebuilding of our societies now in ruins” (2003:176). This last statement is the root of this research. It is due to this invitation by Mugambi that this study ensued. Having discussed Mugambi so much, let us now move on to look at the reception of Villa-Vicencio’s and Mugambi’s views.

3 Reception

The reception of the proposal for a theology of reconstruction, as presented by Mugambi and Villa-Vicencio, has been characterised by varying attitudes in South Africa, ranging from conditional acceptance (Farisani 2002, 2003, and 2010), and reformulatory acceptance (Vellem 2007, 2010) to reluctance (Maluleke 1994a, 1994b). The views of Farisani, Vellem and Maluleke will be examined below.

3.1 Farisani

In a thesis for a doctoral degree, EB Farisani (2002) is very critical of Mugambi in his use of Ezra-Nehemiah in his quest for a theology of reconstruction. He criticizes him for ignoring the fact that the '*am ha'aretz*[13] were also pious, legitimate and god-fearing Israelites. Farisani rightfully reveals that Mugambi does not identify ideologies that operate in the Ezra-Nehemiah text. In his criticism of Mugambi, Farisani successfully exposes the ideological play in the book of Nehemiah. He demonstrates that the Ezra-Nehemiah text has a particular exclusivist ideology which tends to be biased against the '*am ha'aretz,* while being biased in favour of the returned exiles. He then argues that for a theology of renewal, transformation, reconciliation and reconstruction to be effective, it will have to be conscious that the Ezra-Nehemiah text is not neutral. He consistently argues that a theology of reconstruction will have to take seriously, "in its theological backing of the process of renewal and transformation in Africa, the fact that each and every text in the Bible is the product of its socio-historical context" (2002:297). He further suggests that, in order to avoid the oppression and silencing of the already marginalized poor, the text's ideology has to be subjected to a rigorous sociological analysis to de-ideologise it. Additionally, Farisani becomes the voice of the '*am ha'aretz.* He tries to retrieve the voices of the marginalized '*am ha'aretz.* He then tries to read the Ezra-Nehemiah text from the perspective of the '*am ha'aretz.* By so doing, he hopes to sensitize theologians to the voices and needs of all stakeholders in the renewal and transformation of Africa.

Villa-Vicencio is also criticised by Farisani (2003) for not reading Nehemiah "carefully" (2003:30; 2010:514): "He has spoken of reconstruction theology as being based on, among other texts, Ezra-Nehemiah. By using the reconstruction theme in Ezra-Nehemiah without isolating the ideological agenda of the text and identifying the group which is dominant in the text, Villa-Vicencio has inadvertently identified reconstruction as that which is driven by the returned exiles at the exclusion of the '*am ha'aretz.* Such a reading of the text is insensitive to

[13] This Hebrew phrase is translated into English as "people of the land".

the plight of the '*am ha'aretz*" (2003:30). Farisani finds the ideology of Nehemiah too exclusive to be a model for African reconstruction.

There are two things that the present study wants to highlight about Farisani's attitude towards a reconstruction theology as proposed by Mugambi and Villa-Vicencio. The first one is a concern for the de-ideologisation of the Ezra-Nehemiah text (2002:86-87). By de-ideologisation of Ezra-Nehemiah, Farisani means that the ideological agenda in the Ezra-Nehemiah corpus should be isolated and the dominant group be identified. If this is not done, Farisani envisages a situation where African biblical hermeneutics does not have an impact in Africa. Furthermore, Farisani's fear is that such a reading may be counter-productive in that, instead of supporting and advancing the cause of the poor, it may further marginalise and enslave the poor with the "revealed word of God" (2002:86-87). The second one is the break with liberation theology. In his own words, Farisani says: "When one reflects on the feasibility of such a clean break from the old metaphor, one is likely to conclude that a complete jettison of the theme of liberation is not possible" (2002:120). Judging from these considerations, the study interprets Farisani's response as accepting a theology of reconstruction, albeit conditionally. On top of that, he also presents the aim of his research as

> "to develop an African theological paradigm relevant for our African context today. The theological paradigm proposed is reconstruction, renewal and transformation. The ultimate goal of this theology in the post-colonial and the post-liberation era is to equip us theologically to face the socio-economic, political, moral etc. challenges facing our continent today" (2002:60).

In fact, Vellem (2007) directly labels him as a reconstructionist when he says, "Farisani is a biblical scholar. His commitment to a theology of reconstruction, albeit with a clear ideological bias for the *am haarets* is one thing we need to turn to now. Employing the word paradigm consciously, he is a reconstructionist himself" (Vellem 2007:141). Now that Vellem's name has been mentioned, our discussion may turn to his response to a theology of reconstruction.

3.2 Vellem

Vellem (2007) perceives Villa-Vicencio's reconstruction theology as a certain kind of public theology. He takes his "cue from concepts such as 'religion-less', 'participation' and '*perestroika*'. *Perestroika* calls upon the church to make sense of its theological values beyond its membership and engage in a secular debate in a language that is understandable to a broad constituency of people" (Vellem 2007:143). He further argues that the point is that a

particular kind of public theology emanating from a particular understanding of public theology is implied (2007:149). Vellem asserts that "the fulcrum of our dialogue lies in the understanding that Villa-Vicencio's motif of reconstruction is a proposal for a public theology of some universal kind. This is significant not only for this chapter, but for the whole of this dissertation as our purpose is to develop a Black Public Theology. Our contention is that the kind of public theology proposed by Villa-Vicencio is, methodologically, not within the framework of liberation theology or at least Black Theology" (2007:167). He moves on to critique Farisani also.

The problem which Velem picks up from Farisani that this study finds important is the omission of Black Theology of liberation to engage with reconstruction. The argument is that in his [Farisani's] exposition he omits Black Consciousness as a strategy of renewal and that is hard to exonerate. Vellem observes that the omission of Black Consciousness in Farisani's catalogue of renewal strategies inevitably results in the omission of Black Theology of liberation and thus, the engagement of reconstruction with Black Theology of liberation (2007:155). He asserts: "Taking into account that there is already an African theological paradigm in existence, any attempt to develop one that fails to take into cognizance dialogues within African theologies deprives the new paradigm that is envisaged of credibility" (2007:155).

Next, Vellem critically examines Mugambi's deliberations in the discourse of reconstruction theology. From this examination we shall pick out one aspect which we think is important and was not dealt with above, namely the rejection of the Exodus as a biblical metaphor. With quite a number of logically and well-argued points, Vellem demonstrates that Mugambi's denunciation of the Exodus metaphor is not flawless. However, what comes out of this tug of biblical metaphors confirms Vellem's stand on reconstruction theology. He charges that it is not the question of reconstruction *per se* that he seeks to question but the prescriptive dispensation of biblical motifs to the motif of reconstruction that he is questioning (Vellem 2007:167).

So, Vellem's position is not against the proposition of a theology of reconstruction but he argues that Villa-Vicencio's proposal needs to be reformulated as a proposal for a particular kind of political theology so that the underlying ideological ramifications can be unveiled (2010:556). Instead, Vellem posits that reconstruction, development, nation-building, transformation, reconciliation, moral regeneration are all moments that can be harnessed by

the liberation movement to turn Black Theology of liberation into a constructive paradigm of engagement in public life (Vellem 2007:388).

3.3 Maluleke

In a review of Villa-Vicencio's *A Theology of Reconstruction: Nation-building and Human Rights*, Maluleke (1994a) identifies four things that characterise Villa-Vicencio's reconstruction. The first one is that Villa-Vicencio argues for the church to be non-ideological. "It is perhaps here that Villa-Vicencio sorely misses the insights of liberation theology," he charges (1994a:187). Secondly, he argues that relative insignificance is accorded to Africa, her churches and her theologies. He describes the study as a sophisticated dialogue between Western theology and Western democracies seasoned with a "concern-for-the-poor" corrective. Thirdly, he perceives the study as largely non-theological and therefore not really interdisciplinary. Lastly, he finds the study celebrating the "new world order" which is "even more callous to the poor (e.g., the Gulf War, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Angola, Rwanda) than the one before it" (1994a:187-188).

In an article titled *The Proposal for a Theology of Reconstruction: A Critical Appraisal*, his chief informants on a theology of reconstruction being Villa-Vicencio, Gous and Peterson (footnote 11, 1994b:248), Maluleke comes up with "some concluding questions" (1994b:252). *Firstly*, he asks how credible the call for a shift of paradigm is when those who make the call have a record of either rejecting or ignoring black and African theologies of liberation. *Secondly*, he argues that however broadly the concept "nation" may be defined, it is ultimately an excluding rather than an including one. No matter how noble or utopian an understanding of nation may be, it is true that experience of "nations" as they exist in the dog-eats-dog world of today will ultimately influence an understanding of nation. He then asks whether there is such a thing as a theological view of a "nation". *Thirdly*, he raises an issue of context. The assumptions contained in the theology of reconstruction are based on the Western context. The whole argument can be phrased in a question as to how a theology of reconstruction can help develop democracy in a different African context. *Fourthly*, Africans and churches north of the Limpopo have for a long time been engaged in theologies of reconstruction of one sort or the other. Such theologies have read the context as a *post-colonial* or *post-independence* one; meaning, they view the present African realities in terms of a past, colonial reality; precisely because that past is still very strongly felt, psychologically, religiously and politically. The question is whether those in South Africa pondering the theologies of reconstruction do perceive the context as a "post-colonial" one.

Finally, the theology of reconstruction is a "third way" theology meant to regulate the pace and quality of liberation (1994b:252-256). "From a black and African perspective therefore, the proposal for a theology of reconstruction, *in lieu* of, and even alongside of black and African theologies of liberation, is misplaced and unacceptable. As for the charge that theologies of liberation tend to be 'negative' and uncreative, the rejoinder is that since the notion of reconstruction emanates from South Africa's political reform project in general, and from ANC circles in particular, a 'theology of reconstruction' is itself not necessarily a creative project," he finalises (1994b:256). This final response makes it clear that Maluleke rejects the proposal of reconstruction theology as presented by Villa-Vicencio, Gous and Peterson.

The discussion shows that there are varying responses to the idea of an African theology of reconstruction. This discussion will be resumed towards the end of the study again. In its final conclusions, the study will present its response to the proposal, positioning itself in this debate.

4 Conclusion

This chapter examined the views of Villa-Vicencio and Mugambi on a theology of reconstruction. Both Villa-Vicencio and Mugambi are inspired by the end of the Cold War and the end of apartheid in South Africa. They argue that liberation theology served its purpose and now a new theology is needed to engage the process of reconstruction in Africa. The Second Temple literature is seen as an important reservoir for biblical paradigms for reconstruction. Even more striking for this study, the character of Nehemiah is seen as a promising candidate for a biblical paradigm for an African theology of reconstruction.

Different responses to the proposal of a theology of reconstruction and its biblical paradigm were examined as well. Farisani accepts the idea of an African theology of reconstruction albeit with some reservations. He argues for the de-ideologisation of the Ezra-Nehemiah text, if the African biblical hermeneutics wants to have an impact in Africa. He also expresses reservations with a complete abandonment of the theme of liberation.

Vellem also accepts the idea of a theology of reconstruction although he argues that it needs to be reformulated. His problem with Villa-Vicencio's proposal is that methodologically, it is not within the framework of liberation theology or at least Black Theology. He questions Farisani's use of the concept post-liberation. His concern is if the *leitmotif* of liberation is to

be continued, how "post' is Farisani's reconstruction from liberation. His main concern, however, is about Farisani's exposition which omits Black Consciousness as a strategy of renewal; which he finds hard to exonerate. He is also very much uneasy with Mugambi's rejection of the Exodus as a biblical metaphor.

Finally, Maluleke dismisses the proposal of an African theology of reconstruction as proposed by Villa-Vicencio as a sophisticated dialogue between Western theology and Western democracies seasoned with a "concern-for-the-poor" corrective. He also finds the study celebrating the "new world order" which is "even more callous to the poor." He is uneasy with the fact that those who propose this theology (Villa-Vicencio, Gous and Peterson) have a record of either rejecting or ignoring black and African theologies of liberation. He perceives the theology of reconstruction as a "third way" theology meant to regulate the pace and quality of liberation. For him; from a black and African perspective, the proposal for a theology of reconstruction, *in lieu* of, and even alongside of black and African theologies of liberation, is misplaced and unacceptable. The next chapter will proceed to discuss the methodological tools that will be used in this study.

Chapter Two

Social Identity, *Ubuntu* and Ethnicity

1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the motivation of the study. The current chapter proceeds to discuss the methodological tools employed for this study. It will begin by outlining the background to Social Identity (SI). Under SI, Henry Tajfel's Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Jean-Claude Deschamps' Social Covariation Theory (SCT) will be explored. This will be followed by a discussion of Ubuntu, an African philosophical ethic. The discussion will then proceed to discuss Frederik Barth's "transactionalist" ethnic theory. The discussion will end by introducing the *foci* of the study, namely, the temple and the concept of "all Israel". A conclusion will summarise the discussion.

2 Social Identity

The field of social psychology seems to have some insights that can be of great help to our problem. From a social psychological point of view, identity as a major concern refers to the relationship between the concept of the individual and the collective, often viewed as conflicting (Deschamps & Devos 1998:2). "Studies about self-concept and identity also deal with the opposition between the individual and the social; and that opposition is codified according to the distinction made between personal identity and social identity" (Deschamps & Devos 1998:2). By the early seventies it was the view of some social psychologists that from the forties until early seventies the "individual" approach to psychology has been too prevalent (Tajfel 1978:3-4; Hewstone & Jaspars 1982:99; Wetherell 1982:207). These social psychologists were "concerned that the individualistic approach [which] fails to give an adequate account of complex intergroup phenomena" (Hewstone & Miles 1982:99). Referring to the frustration-aggression approach to human inter-individual aggression, Henri Tajfel (1978) acknowledged its usefulness "because of its strengths despite its many weaknesses, since both strengths and weaknesses have led to the asking of many new and fruitful questions" (Tajfel 1978:4). He was concerned that various versions and modifications of this theory assumed, implicitly and sometimes explicitly, that the causes and sequences of

aggressive behaviour between individuals[14] could be directly transposed to the understanding of the social behaviour of groups in conflict (Tajfel 1978:4). Tajfel's feeling was "that most of these approaches and theories deal with the issues of the social psychology of intergroup relations at an inappropriate level of enquiry and explanation" (Tajfel 1978:3). Echoing the same sentiment, Hewstone and Jaspars (1982) felt it is asking a lot of a theory, "that it should parsimoniously and simultaneously account for social phenomena at both interpersonal and intergroup levels" (Hewstone & Jaspars 1982:99). Tajfel's argument was that the processes in question (social conflicts) are *social* psychological because their origins and development are not conceivable outside of the social setting in which they function. The most reasonable thing to do was to focus upon the development of an alternative theoretical and research approach rather than upon a detailed critical analysis of the previous trends" (Tajfel 1978:4). In the early seventies Tajfel and his former student,[15] John Turner, developed the Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Caddick 1982:137; Hogg 1995:555). This study agrees that the origins and development of social conflicts are *social* and cannot be conceived outside of the social setting in which they function. This study therefore will not ponder on theories which are concerned with personal identity but will scrutinise those which concern social identity, for social conflict is at a social level. Below we will now explore the social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner.

2.1 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

Tajfel's social identity theory (SIT) moves from the premise that social identity (SI) and personal identity (PI) are two poles of the same continuum which are negatively dependent (Deschamps & Devos 1998:3). This means when people emphasise their social identity they de-emphasise their personal identity and vice versa. Tajfel's SIT involves a series of interrelated social psychological processes described as social categorization, social identity, social comparison and psychological distinctiveness (Tajfel 1978:61; Bourhis & Hill 1982:453). However, it is essentially based on social categorisation. Categorisation can be defined as follows:

> Categorization refers to psychological processes which tend to organise the environment into categories or groups or persons, objects, or events (or groups of some of their characteristics) according to their similarities, their equivalences concerning their actions, their intentions or behaviour (Deschamps & Devos 1998:4).

[14] From which the theory started and to which most of the research deriving from it was applied.
[15] Turner himself claims to be a former student of Henri Tajfel (Turner 1996:2).

According to Tajfel (1978), when individuals cannot attain self-esteem on their own, they form social groups or categories. They then build their identity on the basis of their membership of that group (social identity). The group however, must be seen as superior than other surrounding groups. They therefore enforce boundaries with other groups to compare their group with other surrounding groups (social comparison) so that they feel distinct as a social group (psychological distinctiveness). The surrounding groups must be represented as inferior so that their group can be perceived as superior. Thus, ingroup members discriminate against outgroup members because the discriminatory strategies establish a distinction between the two groups and enhance the positive value of the ingroup, engendering a positive social identity (Wetherell 1982:207).

Let us rephrase what has just been stated above. According to Tajfel, people have a need to feel good about themselves in order to ascertain to themselves their worthiness in life. In other words they need self-esteem. When they cannot achieve this on their own, they resort to looking for other individuals whom they feel share some similarities with them. This leads to group formation (social categorization).[16] This means, individuals formulate ideas that give a picture of themselves and of others by creating social categories in their minds; categories which have no physical or practical existence (abstract social categories). They then internalize these abstract social categories as aspects of their self-concepts. Knowledge that is acquired in relation to these forms of self-conception produces group behaviour (Tajfel 1978:16).[17] To enhance their self-esteem they start to compare their group with other coexisting groups. They evaluate their group positively and other groups negatively. They also in the process overlook their individual differences on the one hand and emphasise their similarities and differences between their group and other groups on the other hand. Thus, ingroup members discriminate against the outgroup members because the discriminatory strategies establish a distinction between the two groups and enhance the positive value of the ingroup, engendering a positive social identity (Wetherell 1982:207).[18]

[16] "Group" denotes a cognitive entity that is meaningful to the individual at a particular point of time and must be distinguished from the way in which the term "group" is used when it denotes a face-to-face relationship between a number of people (Tajfel 1978:64). Face-to-face relationships are small group relationships like in families, friendship groups or sports teams.

[17] People's behaviour starts to reflect that they belong to their groups, according to Tajfel. This will be picked up when we discuss Deschamps. It is also of paramount importance for this study to note that these social categories are only in the mind of those who structure them, and do not exist physically or practically.

[18] Wetherell (1982) asserts that with the introduction of social identity and social comparison into the theory of social categorization process, there seems to be a suggestion that self-evaluation via intergroup comparison and the resultant desire to maximise group distinctiveness are widespread if not universal (1982:209).

There are two things that the present study wants to highlight about Tajfel's theoretical account. The first one is that social categorisation as depicted by Tajfel is a cause of discrimination. This is a logical conclusion from the fact that discriminatory strategies are employed to establish a distinction between two groups to enhance a positive value of the ingroup and thereby engender a positive social identity. Commenting after analysing some of Tajfel's experiments that demonstrate intergroup differentiation, Deschamps (1994) concluded that "it therefore seems to be sufficient to introduce into a situation a difference in membership category for a discrimination in favour of the ingroup to appear" (1994:545). The second one is that there are several consequences regarding this discrimination.[19] The consequence that attracts the attention of the study is that when the lower status groups cannot get out of their situation they might engage in social action which would lead to desirable changes for the situation. The study cannot help to associate social action with undesirable social violence.

Having these two highlighted points in mind, the study appreciates Tajfel's contribution in the study of intergroup differentiation. His theoretical deliberation empowers communities in their endeavours to understand social conflict. In the words of Hewstone and Greenland, "in particular, social identity theory helps us to understand the behaviour of those whose identity is perceived to be threatened, and whose behaviour might otherwise seem quite irrational or pointless (2000:138). Hewstone and Greenland argue that social identity differs from earlier group perspectives in two key respects. First, in contrast to claims that ethnocentrism is rampant, social identity theory predicts that members of social groups will differentiate primarily on dimensions that provide them with a favourable view of their own group (i.e. dimensions on which the in-group is superior to the out-group). Moreover, intergroup discrimination is often driven by in-group favouritism rather than out-group derogation. Second, in contrast to claims that competitive goals cause conflict, social identity theory

[19] Tajfel (1978) identifies several consequences regarding group membership that follow upon this 'recognition of identity in socially defined terms'. He argues that it can be assumed that a member will tend to remain in a group and seek membership of new groups if these groups have some contributions to make to the positive aspects of his social identity; i.e. to those aspects of it from which he derives satisfaction. However, if a group does not satisfy this requirement, the individual will tend to leave it. But, it can also be impossible for the individual to leave the group for some 'objective' reasons or because it conflicts with important values which are themselves a part of his acceptable self image. If leaving the group presents the difficulties just mentioned, then two solutions are possible. He can change one's interpretations of the attributes of the group so that its unwelcome features (e.g. low status) are either justified or made acceptable through a reinterpretation or to accept the situation for what it is and engage in social action which would lead to desirable changes for the situation or combine the two. Lastly, the 'positive aspects of social identity' and the reinterpretation of attributes and engagement in social action only acquire meaning in relation to, or in comparisons with other groups (Tajfel 1978:64).

argues that social categorization per se can cause intergroup discrimination (2000:137). Tajfel's theory is very useful for the aim of this study to understand more about the causes of social conflict. However, just knowing about the causes of social conflict is not enough for this study. This study wants to move beyond the causes and into ways of alleviating or at least reducing social conflict. This study is inspired in this regard more by the most promising social-psychological intervention to reduce intergroup conflict. This social psychological intervention attempts to change the structure of social categorizations via crossed categorization. This perspective is proposed as a key part of a necessary approach to intergroup conflict (Hewstone and Greenland 2000:136). It is Deschamps' Social Covariation Theory (SCT), that complements what Tajfel had achieved. The next section elaborates on Deschamps' SCT.

2.2 Social Covariation Theory (SCT)

Jean-Claude Deschamps' covariation theory is a social attribution theory. It is interested in how members of different social groups explain the behaviour (and the consequences of the behaviour) of members of their own and other social groups (Hewstone & Jaspars 1982:99).[20] In simple terms, it is interested in the relationship between the social categories to which members of different social groups belong on the one hand, and the way in which they perceive, represent and behave towards members of their own social groups and towards members of other social groups. In terms of the latter, Deschamps' (1984) view is that the three levels (behavioural level, level of representations and evaluative judgments) are interrelated. He argues that the introduction of a divergence at the behavioural level, in this case creating a conflict, brings about a differentiation at the level of representations and evaluative judgments, and the introduction of a convergence at the behavioural level diminishes differentiation at the level of judgments (Deschamps 1984:548-549). According to Hewstone & Jaspars (1982), "a tentative theory of social attribution has been advanced by Deschamps on the basis of early perceptual and cognitive studies in social psychology. Deschamps' theoretical framework is constructed from research in two areas, these being: social categorization and social representations" (1982:111). Hewstone and Jaspars (1982) argue that Deschamps demonstrates that the processes of social categorization are at the heart of attribution - at least in the case of intergroup relations (Hewstone & Jaspars 1982:100). Because Deschamps' theoretical framework is constructed from research in two areas,

[20] Hewstone and Jaspars mention the contributions of Tajfel (1959, 1972) and Tajfel and Wilkes (1963) as examples. Moreover, because of a language limitation, the study has limited access to Deschamps' works for he writes mainly in French. For this reason there will be quite a use of secondary sources.

namely, social categorisation and social representations, it is imperative to discuss these research areas individually. The first to be discussed is social categorisation and thereafter social representations will be discussed.

2.2.1 Social Categorization

In Tajfel, social categorization leads a social group/category to emphasise differences between itself and other groups while it overlooks differences among members of the in-group and emphasises their similarities. In Deschamps and Devos, social categorization, ***in certain conditions***, can lead the social group/category to emphasise differences between the out-group and the in-group while at the same time differences are also accentuated among the members of the in-group. Both sociocentrism and egocentrism will increase when categorization is emphasised. This underlines the relevance of the simultaneous variation of differentiation between groups and among the ingroup members. Therefore, similarity and difference, social identity and personal identity must no longer be considered as two poles of the same continuum which are negatively dependent. Consequently, models based on Tajfel's work and the covariation hypothesis can be explained at the same time (Deschamps & Devos 1998:8). When Deschamps and Devos say "models based on Tajfel's work and the covariation hypothesis can be explained at the same time" they mean these theories do not negate each other. They can both be sustained. Within covariation Tajfel's model can be explained, as it has been indicated that Deschamps' theoretical framework is constructed from research in social categorization and social representations. This will become clearer as we further discuss social categorisation.

According to Deschamps and Doise (1978), Tajfel's model of categorization – where individuals are concerned with an environment consisting exclusively of two categories: their own membership category and the other – is an existent or actual situation. Their argument is that there is no doubt that situations of exclusively two categories exist and sometimes it is a conception that people have of their social environment.[21] Having said that, they continue to argue that:

> It remains true, however, that the social environment of an individual (or the conception he has of it) does not always consist just of his own membership group and another group; but rather, it will sometimes include a network of categories which, instead of being in the simple juxtaposition, will tend to cut across each other (Deschamps & Doise 1978:143-144).

[21] A relevant example is apartheid South Africa where, according to the scheme of things, there were only Blacks and Whites.

As far as Deschamps and Doise (1978) are concerned, there are two types of categorisation, namely, *simple categorizations* and *crossed categorizations* (Deschamps and Doise 1978:144). Simple categorizations are situations in which there exists a radical dichotomy between a membership category and another category.[22] As we can notice, this is how Tajfel presented social categorization. Crossed categorization, on the other hand, is a complex phenomenon so that we would rather explain it by making an example. John and Sam are members of the Reformed Church. Dick and Tom are members of the Catholic Church. There will be an accentuation of differences between the Reformed believers and the Catholics while at the same time there will be an accentuation of similarities between John and Sam as Reformed believers and between Dick and Tom as Catholics. This is *simple categorization*. However, John and Dick are fans of a local soccer club called Orlando Pirates while Sam and Tom are followers of a local soccer club called Kaizer Chiefs. Now, according to this second categorization, differences are emphasised between Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs. There are similarities between John and Dick as Orlando Pirates fans and Sam and Tom are different from them because they favour Kaizer Chiefs. There are also similarities between Sam and Tom as Kaizer Chiefs fans and they are different from John and Dick who favour Orlando Pirates. At the same time there is a difference between John and Dick because the other one is a Reformed follower of Orlando Pirates while the other is a Catholic follower of Orlando Pirates. The same applies to Sam and Tom as they are Reformed and Catholic followers of Kaizer Chiefs respectively. There are also similarities appearing between the Catholic follower of Orlando Pirates and the Catholic follower of Kaizer Chiefs as they are Catholics (similarity appearing between the outgroups). The same applies to the Reformed followers of Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs as they are Reformed believers. This is a *crossed categorization*. "As a result, there should be a conflict between the accentuation both of differences and similarities inside each of the categories and between the opposing categories. A prediction can therefore be made that, in this case, the two opposite effects should lead to a decrease in the extent of categorical differentiation" (Deschamps and Doise 1978:145). Referring to the studies they conducted to test their hypothesis about cross categorization, Deschamps and Doise (1978) assert that the studies helped to make explicit a limitation to the functioning of categorical differentiation in the case of crossed categories (Deschamps and Doise 1978:158). Cross-categories diminish categorical differentiation. As it has already been indicated above, Deschamps' theoretical framework is constructed from

[22] Whether it is "objectively" or at a representational level.

social categorization and social representations, social representations are the next item of our discussion.

2.2.2 Social Representations

Hewstone and Jaspars (1982) define social representations "simply as the shared systems of belief that individual members of social groups hold about their own group and other groups (Hewstone & Jaspars 1982:113). Emda Orr (2007) defines social representations as "the verbal and behavioural forms by which members of a society co-construct the world they live in" (2007:44). Hewstone and Jaspars agree with Deschamps that social representations should form an essential part of a theory of social attribution. There is also evidence from the study of the functions of stereotypes that these social beliefs have a role to play in attributions, continue Hewstone and Jaspars (1982:113). Deschamps identifies a very strong connection between social categorisation and social representations. In the words of Hewstone and Jaspars (1982), "Deschamps makes the point that in a situation of less than complete information observers infer the characteristics of a social object on the basis of the category to which it belongs. The thrust of this argument is that typical intergroup biases are at work in attribution processes" (1982:115). In a discussion of categorical differentiation, Deschamps (1984) gives an exposition of theoretical propositions describing the process of categorical differentiation. In the second proposition, it is argued that categorical differentiation brings about, among other differentiations, differentiation of a representative nature. In other words, belonging to a social category also influences how members of that category represent those they differentiate themselves from. It has been stated already that, according to Deschamps, social categorisation is at the heart of attribution – at least in the case of intergroup relations. Bearing in mind that social representations are a product of categorical differentiation that prevails, whether it is increased or decreased categorical differentiation, it is essential to note that social representations exist in relation to other levels of differentiation. The most important of these differentiations are perceptual and evaluative differentiations and behavioural differentiations. The first four of the six theoretical propositions describing the process of categorical differentiation given by Deschamps (1984) are sufficient to illuminate the relational nature of social representations to other differentiation levels. They argue as follows:

> Differentiation of certain aspects of social reality is produced in relation to other differentiations of this reality, just as, according to the model of the categorization process, certain perceptual differentiations are produced in connection with other perceived differentiations. Categorical differentiation brings

> about differentiation of a behavioural, evaluative and representative nature. Categorical differentiation is realized in the same manner within the domains of behaviour, evaluation and representation as it is between these domains. A differentiation in one of the areas could thus be articulated by a differentiation in one of the other areas. When a differentiation exists on one of these levels (behavioural, evaluative or representative) there is a tendency to create differentiation corresponding to the other levels (1984:548).

In effect, this argument's purport is that a particular model of categorisation leads to a particular differentiation. The resultant categorical differentiation further leads to a particular representation of the other category and therefore, to a corresponding evaluation of the other group and to a corresponding behaviour towards that other group. In fact, Hewstone and Jaspars (1982) argue that representations function so as to justify behaviour in relation to the other (1982:126).

To summarise this discussion, an exposition of the importance of Deschamps' theory of attribution for this study is being given. By combining research from social categorisation and social representation, Deschamps provides an enlightening revelation about the source of power for social conflict in communities. The models of social categories (simple or cross) we emphasise during the process of identity formation produce the kinds of social representations that correspond to them. Simple categorisation, by virtue of its discriminatory strategies for differentiation, produces discriminatory social representations and consequently, discriminatory perceptions, evaluations and actions. This kind of an atmosphere is a breeding ground for social conflict. Cross categorisation on the other hand, by virtue of its diminishing effect on differentiation, produces more accommodating social representations and by extension, more accommodating social perceptions, evaluations and behaviour. It stands to reason therefore that cross categorisation should be emphasised in the process of identity formation vis-à-vis simple categorisation. This study therefore, recommends this perspective as a key part of a necessary approach to intergroup conflict. Because identity is central in the study's research, it is therefore imperative that the study deduce types of identities from the types of categorisation emphasised. Simple categorisation discriminates against the "other" and therefore negates the "other". The kind of identity based on simple categorisation, for the sake of this discussion, the present study will term negative identity. The identity that crops out of a cross categorisation on the other hand, because it accommodates the other, the study will term accommodative identity. From now on, a discussion on identity will be referring to negative and accommodative identities if a distinction needs to be made. A process of identity formation can either be based on simple

categorization and by implication, negative identity or crossed categorization and hence, accommodative identity. The next section will discuss *Ubuntu* as an African ethic which is often determinative of the mode of categorization that takes place in society.

3 *Ubuntu*

The discussion on Ubuntu will be under three subheadings, namely, perspectives on Ubuntu, a socio-historical understanding and the mediation of Ubuntu.

3.1 Perspectives on Ubuntu

The Ubuntu-talk is not a simple and straight-forward talk as it seems in a monologue. As soon as one enters into a dialogue, one soon realises that different people have different views on Ubuntu and this makes Ubuntu-talk quite a challenging discourse. Take, for example, Maluleke's (1999) remark on the topic. According to him:

> We forget that Ubuntu must be understood within the context of a mainly feudal socio-economic system in which the chief, the chiefdom, the clan and the extended family, were crucial providers of wealth and values. We cannot therefore simply transplant Ubuntu from that context. The mechanical extraction and therefore separation of Ubuntu from the rest of African culture and its historic context is very problematic (1999:13).

This remark challenges one to come out clearly as to what s/he means when invoking a discourse on the Ubuntu notion. It also, therefore, forces the study to lay bare what does it refer to when it raises the Ubuntu notion. To respond, this study has no intention of propagating a fundamentalist, blind appeal to Ubuntu as a fundamentally unbroken and unadulterated African age-old tradition. It instead appeals for a humble examination of Ubuntu and see what renewed perspective or lessons might be drawn for a discourse on social reconstruction in contemporary (South) Africa. This attitude is informed by two presuppositions. The first one is that it is impossible to revert to a feudal socio-economic system at this point of (South) African history. The second one is that it is to deny a culture of its dynamism, and therefore an unfair practice to that culture, to pin it solely to one particular time in history. Chaplin (2010) provides a credible justification of an appeal to Ubuntu when he says:

> A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirms and respects others, does not feel threatened by others' strengths or abilities, because he or she recognises that we all belong to a greater whole. However, a growing rift between new structures and traditional values has seen the erosion of the spirit of Ubuntu, and made it difficult for people to interact openly in certain instances. If the

> concept of Ubuntu is consciously harnessed, it has the power to bring about increased harmony within society, promoting a new patriotism among the people of its nation. Ubuntu calls for unity and mutual co-operation among people who live in a particular area with honesty and reliability being important (2010:2).

Having admitted that an unadulterated Ubuntu is impossible in the post-colonial/apartheid era, the study disagrees with the claim that Ubuntu is a product of globalisation (Van Binsbergen 2001). Responding to Mogobe Ramose's challenging of the denial of the existence of an African philosophy and Ramose's denunciation of globalisation's contribution to Africa's problems, Wim van Binsbergen (2001) counter-argues as follows:

> Much as I endorse Ramose's point that Southern Africa has something of great value to offer to the globalised world, we differ with regard to the role we assign to globalisation in this connection. For Ramose, globalisation is an outside phenomenon to be countered by *Ubuntu*; I on the contrary argue that both contemporary Southern Africa, and *Ubuntu* itself, are among the products of globalisation, and can only be understood as such products (2001:61-62).

Continuing, Van Binsbergen represents Ramose as seeing in Ubuntu the value orientation of precolonial Southern African villages, which in his (Ramose's) opinion is faithfully rendered in the contemporary academic statements, and by that playing down the well-established hermeneutical insight that all representation is distortion. Ramose views a revival of Ubuntu as a remedy to the trauma caused by colonisation, continues Van Binsbergen. To this, he counter-argues as follows;

> I on the other hand see *Ubuntu* in the first place as a contemporary academic construct, called forth by the same forces of oppression, economic exploitation, and cultural alienation that have shaped Southern African society over the past two centuries. With Ramose I subsume these forces under the term of globalisation (2001:62).

Lastly, Van Binsbergen's understanding of African philosophy of Ubuntu is that:

> Statements of *Ubuntu* philosophy suggest that, now that the mists of North Atlantic hegemonic subjugation and the ensuing self-censorship have been lifted from the minds of African thinkers, the true African thought can come out in an unadulterated form that, since the urban, modern consumers of such a restated philosophy can largely identify as Africans, will inspire their actions in majority rule South Africa and Zimbabwe for the better (2001:72).

As it has already been indicated above, the study accepts Van Binsbergen's dismay at the re-emergence of an unadulterated form of the true African thought. However, the claim that Ubuntu discourse is a primarily and purely a product of North Atlantic globalisation which

has no connection to African culture is an extreme exaggeration of the conquest of African people by Europe and an arrogant denial of the African identity. The chief and the chiefdom might not be found in some parts of South Africa, but the clan and the extended family are still part and parcel of the social structure of the "locations" in the small rural towns,[23] not rural villages, of the Little Karoo and the Eastern Cape,[24] albeit not in a feudal arrangement but in a market-oriented economic context. These structures do inform the thoughts of the location-dwellers of these areas. For example, some black graduates do not prosper like their white counterparts in life partly because of the responsibilities they have towards extended families. A clan name is still one's identity and it influences the way people interact. With these examples, the study wants to refute the claim that Southern Africa is a pure breed of North Atlantic globalisation and can only be understood as such. This is not to deny that globalisation has a very strong influence on the Southern African people because that is undeniable but they still have their African identity which is distinct from Europe.

3.1.1 A Socio-historical Understanding

Returning to explaining the study's use of Ubuntu, the study emphasises that it is not calling for the evocation of an unadulterated form of Ubuntu because it is impossible. On the other hand, the study does not view Ubuntu as a new innovation of the elite that has its roots from another continent which is not Africa because that would be denying an African identity. The study views Ubuntu as a culture which originated in Africa, some of whose tenets can also be found in other continents as well, which is in motion and therefore in contact and in negotiation with other cultures from other continents and by implication, not bound by time. In other words, Ubuntu should be understood in its socio-historical context. Its emphasis is on good human relations to foster a life of respect, dignity and well-being for all human beings. Like all cultural values, it is not often lived by its own people and sometimes seems to have been abandoned at all, hence the moral degeneration manifested in acts of armed robbery and murder of strangers, sexual assault of unsuspecting victims, domestic violence and lately xenophobia. Richard Nicholson (2003) captures this last sentiment when he evaluates the

[23] Rural towns because, while situated in the urban setting, their economic backbone is white commercial farming.

[24] The locations are the so-called townships; the residential areas which were reserved strictly for black people in the urban areas during the apartheid era. In Afrikaans it is called *lokasie* and then Xhosalised to *ilokishi*. They were called locations to differentiate them from the other racial groups' residential areas. The location-dwellers would admiringly abbreviate the word to *kasie*. The researcher prefers the word location/*elokishini* to township. The maximum period the researcher stayed full-time in a rural village is three years, – from January 1994 to December 1996 – in one of the most "backward" rural villages called Mhala in Idutywa. Three years is not a short time. A university student obtains a degree after three years as a confirmation that s/he has learnt enough to be independent. The researcher has visited many times thereafter. Nevertheless, the researcher would rather stick to the locations where he has spent most of his lifetime.

process of rearticulating African cultural values in the face of Africa's ethical problems which seem to call into question the idea that Africans live by Ubuntu. This is conveyed when he indicates that disobedience to values is a shortfall of all cultural groups and therefore Africans are no exception and that does not necessarily invalidate Ubuntu as an ethos to be evoked. He says:

> Of course the fact that Africans do not always exemplify ideas such as Ubuntu does not mean that traditional African values are discredited or of no significance, any more than the activities of some Middle Eastern rulers negate the validity of Islamic values, or the activities of President Bush and his advisors negate the validity of traditional Christian values. It is often true that people fail to live out their stated values. But the crises in Africa do mean that we must be careful not to overstate the hold that traditional African ethics have in practice in African society. They perhaps exist as a concept, as an ideal, as a lodestar, but not always as a fully lived reality (Nicholson 2008:6).

The socio-historical circumstances need to be taken into consideration when Ubuntu is evoked as a discourse. This leads to another question of the mediation between Ubuntu and other cultures.

3.1.2 The Mediation of Ubuntu.

Another crucial question asked by Maluleke (1999) is – if Ubuntu is so good and useful – why is it not recommended to all South Africans and in fact, to everyone in the world? If it is so useful why can it not be fostered among, and expected of, white South Africans too (1999:13)?

> Given the fact that the "global village" is nothing like a 16th century feudal "African village" consisting of a network of extended families, what is the effect and wisdom of recommending Ubuntu to blacks in 1999? The global village is not an extended family; it is a village of fierce and vicious competition whose fruit is not enjoyed by all its citizens. To recommend that Africans, and Africans alone, practice Ubuntu in a context where no one else practices it, is nothing short of despicable cruelty (Maluleke 1999:13).

The premise to depart from in trying to deal with a question of this nature is to go back to the discussion on identity formation. Ubuntu, by emphasising good human relations, has a lot to do with social categorisation. According to Deschamps (1984):

> The process of categorization not only structures perception; it also accounts for differential behaviour and allows us to predict certain social transformations. It not only plays a role on the level of perception, but also on the level of interaction between social agents (1984:543).

The study recommended cross categorisation as a perspective that should be a key part of a necessary approach to intergroup interaction. The study adds by suggesting that Ubuntu should be the matrix of a form of cross categorisation we need to emphasise in (South) Africa. This addition of Ubuntu as a matrix triggers an addition to the types of identity discussed above. Above it was argued that since simple categorisation discriminates against the "other" and therefore negates the "other", the study terms the type of identity produced by simple categorisation as negative identity. Since identity produced by cross categorisation is accommodative, it was termed accommodative identity. Now that it has been argued for a cross categorisation whose matrix is Ubuntu, a third type of identity emerges. Because Ubuntu sees a complementary relationship between people,[25] the type of identity resulting from this phenomenon is a complementary identity, a type that the present study will be advocating. Coming back to the relationship between Ubuntu and white South Africans, if reference is made to (South) Africa, it includes all (South) African people including white (South) Africans in this study. A foundation for such a context has already been laid in South Africa. According to Michael Onyebuchi Eze (2010):

> The end of apartheid and its narrative discourse demanded a new form of public social history to reflect the changing times; a constructive historiography that will enable the formation of a nation-state to displace the old order and its exclusionary practices; a new history that will reflect the political necessity of social transformation vis-à-vis a sociocultural and political demand for reconciliation and healing (2010:120).

The first embodiment of such public history was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which promoted the redemptive value of memory and the identification and dedication of new, inclusive national monuments. This public history was of course ingratiated in a new public discourse (Ubuntu) that became a source of legitimacy for the TRC (Eze 2010:120). The new public history will redefine past historical moments with a new interpretation of the content of its embedded narrative, continues Eze. He counts moments of the embodiment of identification and dedication of new national monuments, for example the fate of Robben Island after 1992; the integration of the Afrikaner commemoration of the Day of the Covenant in remembrance of the Battle of Blood River on December 16, 1838, and the liberation movements' Heroes Day[26] ; the fusion of the South African Defence Force (SADF) with the military wings of the liberation movements; the new flag that reflected the colours of

[25] The basic tenet of Ubuntu is: "A person is a person through other people."
[26] Both events celebrated on December 16 became baptized as the national Day of Reconciliation

the new and the older; and the new national anthem which became the merger of the liberation *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica* (God bless Africa) with the old apartheid national anthem.

> These were conscious attempts by the Mandela government to achieve a contemporaneous shared time, a sense of national inclusiveness, a national core by assimilating the old into a new order. A move that is not akin to displacement of the old but of integration into a new sovereign (Eze 2010:120-121).

Another challenge to the evocation of Ubuntu comes from Coertze (2001). Coertze denounces the evocation of the notion of Ubuntu in South Africa for nation-building. This denunciation challenges the present study to justify its evocation of the Ubuntu notion for reconstruction in (South) Africa in the light of Coertze's criticism. This is necessitated by the fact that the present study considers nation-building and reconstruction as related processes. If this study argues that Ubuntu is proper for reconstruction, nation-building is affected. In the progression of his argument, Coertze basically takes two steps. The first step is tracing Ubuntu from its traditional form to its present form. The second step is putting an Ubuntu-based nation-building process into his perspective. This section's intention is to examine the two steps of Coertze's argument in order to test whether its stand on Ubuntu as a resource for reconstruction in (South) Africa is sustainable.

Coertze is concerned that Ubuntu, a concept that refers to basic respect for each other based on traditional [i.e. African] values has recently been coated with political connotations (2001:116-117). According to Coertze, Ubuntu, in its traditional form, is questionable as a basis for indiscriminate inclusivity. This is confirmed by the fact that, in Nguni and Sotho languages, white persons are called by derogatory terms, for instance *abelungu* in isiZulu, or *makgowa* in Sesotho, emphasizing that Ubuntu refers only to the essence of humankind from Africa, he argues. His conclusion from the study of idioms in the indigenous Bantu and Sotho languages is that there are no proverbs or sayings he could find in which either Ubuntu or Botho were explained or praised as abstract concepts. "The observance of the abstract qualities of kindness, goodwill and high moral standard we have mentioned previously, were all extolled in concrete situations between relatives, friends or persons having common interests or speaking the same language", he further asserts (2001:115).

However, there are other sources which portray a different picture about pre-colonial Ubuntu. Mnyaka, for example, asserts that "the attitudes of Africans towards foreigners or strangers in the past were those of tolerance and benevolence. Strangers were made to feel welcome and to move with ease within the community" (2003:155). Their security at times lay in their

absorption through cultural assimilation and intermarriages, he continues. Mnyaka firmly states that it was inculcated in people's minds to be conscious of strangers. He quotes a Xhosa proverb that says "*unyawo alunampumlo/looto ha lena nko"* (Sotho) (lit. trans.: a foot has no nose). It means no one knows when one will be a stranger in a foreign land so one should beware of one's unkind actions. He further explains: "This proverb means that one has an extensive obligation to admit and to be generous and be supportive to strangers" (2003:156). He quotes another one which says: *"isisu somhambi asingakanani, singemva, ngaphambili ngumhlonzo* (Xhosa)*"* (lit. trans.: the stomach of a traveler is not big, it is only in front, it is limited by the spine). The proverb means it should not be a strain to feed a stranger. Another contribution is from Barben's article which describes the attitude of the Xhosa-speaking people towards Europeans before colonization as follows:

> It was their existence as subsistence farmers on infertile soil, their attachment to their cattle, and their loyalty to their own community that tempered the extension of *Ubuntu* towards European seafarers wrecked on their shore. Nonetheless, almost invariably *Ubuntu* was employed in their interactions with Europeans until a natural suspicion and wariness set in because of the way that they were treated by colonists and sojourners alike... (2004: 8).

Barben further refers to the first, albeit brief, recorded contact between Xhosa-speaking tribesmen (in this case, the Pondo) and survivors of the wreck of a Portuguese vessel (the great galleon *São Joao*) that took place in 1552. The next meeting took place when the galleon *São Bento* was wrecked off the coast of Pondoland (the northern Eastern Cape) in 1554. She then concludes that:

> Contacts between wreck survivors and local inhabitants were on the whole good; there are many accounts of the Portuguese being impressed by the kind-heartedness and generosity of tribesman who shared what little they had, even their precious cattle, with strangers... However, there were many instances of cruelty on the part of the Portuguese, and misunderstandings on both sides, which led to unnecessary conflict. The locals, for example, were convinced that the Portuguese were cannibals who wanted to eat them, because they had seen or heard that they had captured and roasted men!(2004: 8-9).

These presentations do not corroborate the claim that traditional Ubuntu did not accommodate strangers, as Coertze claims. The fact that Africans do not always exemplify values espoused by Ubuntu does not necessarily mean that traditional Ubuntu did not accommodate strangers. Sometimes people in general fail to live out their stated values; maybe sometimes because of prevailing circumstances. As for the term *abelungu*, it is puzzling, for the root of the noun means good or right. It is therefore an ironic situation that white people will be pronounced by a noun depicting goodness or rightness and at the same time be perceived as not part of the essence of humanity, as Coertze

argues. Based on the presentations of Mnyaka and Barben, the study affirms that traditional Ubuntu does provide a basis for indiscriminate inclusivity.

On Ubuntu-based nation-building, Coertze's perspective is discouraging. He defines nation-building as follows: "The concept nation building refers to a situation where a state authority through a process of directed culture change, sometimes even forcibly, strives to promote a conscious sense of national identity" (2001:116). He argues that the South African government is at present consciously trying to build a new ethnos out of the existing cultural diversity. As far as he is concerned:

> In the new South Africa the envisaged ethnic conviction of an all embracing *Ubuntu* will have to be sold to a number of such existing smaller ethnic entities which are all of them proud of their own peoplehood. Among the many groups of this kind in South Africa the Afrikaner people and the Zulu stand out as groups showing a marked unwillingness to relinquish their existing tradition. In both of these instances the existing ethnic consciousness arising from a unique language, a proud history of self-assertion and a high regard for their own tradition constitutes a much broader base for the conception of peoplehood than that stemming from the very recent official ideology of *Ubuntu* (2001:117).

He outlines four criteria to demarcate an ethnic entity and emphasises the fourth criterion[27]. He describes this fourth criterion as follows:

> This is the people's own perception of themselves as possessing an exclusive identity. It is the distinction made between us and the others on account of our history, our language, our religion, our past political expression, etc., and our endeavor to ensure the enduring existence of our identity, that is the important element. Such is subjective perception by a group of people of their separate identity, their ethnicity or peoplehood (2001:117).

This quotation indicates that Coertze is in favor of an exclusive kind of a national sentiment. He is pessimistic about an "ethnic conviction of an all embracing *Ubuntu*". He outlines six factors[28] that can retard the peaceful progress of the South African nation-building process and he is convinced that in their effect they are mutually amplifying the possibility of conflict (2001:117). Lastly, Coertze perceives the nation-building process in South Africa as the westernization of South Africans. According to him, "it is not clear in what way those cultural groups in South Africa who already are bearers of Western culture like the Afrikaner people

[27] The other three are (1) a distinctive way of life, professing an identity that can be explained in (2) past historical and (3) geopolitical terms.

[28] They are (1) past enmity between those in contact, (2) difference in numerical strength, (3) difference in relative cultural achievement, (4) attitudes of conservatism, relative (5) superiority and (6) inferiority between groups. Difference in hereditary genetic type, that is difference in race, is an additional factor ensuring maximum social visibility.

and their English-speaking counterparts could benefit from the envisaged process of westernisation in South Africa. One cannot benefit from receiving something that one already possesses" (2001:117). In the last paragraph of his conclusion, this sentiment is repeated but it now includes Ubuntu. It is stated as follows: "It is not clear in what way the bearers of Western civilization in South Africa could benefit from the propagation of *Ubuntu*, with its new content, as denoting a specific South African national identity" (2001:118).

The first thing that the study responds to is the claim that the political dimension of Ubuntu is a new innovation. Traditional Ubuntu was not apolitical. Above, Mnyaka was reported as stating that, due to Ubuntu, strangers were made to feel welcome and to move with ease within the community. The granting of refuge by Xhosas to fugitive sections of the Basotho tribes scattered by internecine conflicts around 1680 (Soga 1932: 19-20) and tribes dislodged by Shaka early in the nineteenth century (Bhongela 2003: 3) were political decisions and acts of Ubuntu. The integration of the Hottentot clans into the Xhosas was a political decision (Soga 1932: 20).

The second response is to the claim that nation-building in South Africa is westernisation of South Africa. South Africa is to a large degree westernized already. The introduction of Ubuntu is rather an Africanisation of the western mode of life that is now firmly established in South Africa. If the "bearers of Western civilization in South Africa" have nothing to benefit from the westernisation of South Africa, as Coertze argues, maybe they have in the Africanisation. The primary benefit from Ubuntu is respect without condescension for all, including the "bearers of Western civilization in South Africa". It is a pity that Coertze views the talk about equality and the equal possession of human rights as resulting in a new neurotic disorder[29].

Lastly, Coertze prefers an exclusive kind of a national sentiment. In an Ubuntu-based nation-building process he senses a potential for conflict. On the contrary, the study prefers an inclusive kind of a national sentiment. In an Ubuntu-based nation-building process it recognizes a conflict-diminishing effect. According to Mnyaka, Ubuntu is the spiritual foundation, inner state, orientation and good disposition that motivates, challenges and makes one perceive, have feelings and act in a humane way towards others. It is best realized or

[29] In more recent times the excessive global emphasis on equality and the equal possession of human rights have in Western societies, as a reaction, resulted in a new neurotic disorder in which patients show an almost pathological concern with their own intrinsic worth as individual human beings (2001:117).

evident in harmonious relations in society (2003:144). Harmonious relations in society create a conducive environment for a progressive reconstruction process. The study maintains therefore that Ubuntu is a positive contribution to reconstruction. Finally, if Ubuntu is a positive contribution to reconstruction, it should be to related processes like nation-building, reconciliation, redress, transformation, reform and others. Ubuntu has been extensively discussed. The discussion now proceeds to examine the concept of ethnicity.

4 Ethnicity

According to Henderson (1999) an ethnic group is a collective sharing a common ancestry, a link with a specific territory, a perception of a shared culture and a belief in a common destiny. Ethnic criteria may include a perception of shared culture, nationality, language, religion and race (1999: 751). Henderson argues that:

> This belief in a common ancestry owes as much if not more to myths than to genetics. To be sure, some ethnic communities may result from consanguinal[30] or kinship ties, but to the greatest extent heritage is a function of belief and not genetic descent. It is inconceivable that somewhere in antiquity there are primordial parents of each ethnic group in the world. Nonetheless, myths of common descent are powerful inducements to ethnic identification. Such myths provide symbols around which elites can focus political, economic and social activity. They provide emblems and totems representing in-group and out-group memberships (1999: 751-752).

Primarily, there are two dominant approaches to the study of 'ethnicity', namely, primordialism and instrumentalism (Hutchinson and Smith 1996; Henderson 1999). Hutchinson and Smith (1996) assert that "few scholars in practice adhere to either the primordialist or the instrumentalist pole *tout court*[31] (Hutchinson & Smith 1996:9). Primordialists, on the one hand, perceive ethnicity as a given, original, fixed and permanent entity. They argue that the cultural and biological contents within the ethnical boundary are the essence of ethnicity. The main criticism against primordialism is that it presents a static and naturalistic view of ethnicity and it also lacks explanatory power (Hutchinson & Smith 1996:8). It does not acknowledge the elasticity of ethnic identity and identity flexibility of people in different situations. Instrumentalists, on the other hand, perceive ethnicity as a social construction; a result of manipulation by different interest and status groups and therefore is open to perpetual change to suit particular interests. Emphasis is put on the

[30] Consanguinity: relationship by being descended from the same family (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary: 1976).
[31] Without qualification or additional information.

interest groups and status groups who provide individuals who "'cut and mix' from a variety of ethnic heritages and cultures to forge their own individual or group identities" (Hutchinson & Smith 1996:9). Instrumentalism is criticised for defining interests largely on material terms and downplaying the affective dimensions of ethnicity.

Primordialism does not contribute beneficially for our study so the focus shifts to instrumentalism. The discussion will briefly examine three instrumentalist approaches and then focus on the one that informs its approach to ethnicity. According to Hutchinson and Smith: "Three alternative traditions of enquiry into ethnicity are Barth's 'transactionalist', Horowitz's 'social psychological' and Armstrong and Smith's 'ethno-symbolic' approaches (1996: 9). Horowitz's social psychological approach uses Henri Tajfel's group psychology and focuses on differential estimations of group worth and on their collective stereotypes (Hutchinson and Smith 1996: 9). Horowitz posits the quest for the affirmation of 'personal worth' as a central motive of human behaviour. Because self-esteem is in large measure a function of the esteem accorded to groups of which one is a member, especially for memberships as central to personal identity as ethnic membership tends to be in Asia and Africa, 'group worth' is a focal concern of both the individual and the group. In addition to group worth, Horowitz adds a political dimension of legitimacy. The contest for group legitimacy, for political inclusion and exclusion, merges with the quest for group worth to form 'a politics of ethnic entitlement. For Horowitz, this is the engine of mass ethnic conflict. In short, Horowitz's theory is another contribution in the attempts to understand ethnic conflict from a social psychological point of view. Armstrong and Smith's ethno-symbolism is another attempt to understand ethnic mobilisation. "The main concern of 'ethno-symbolists' is with the persistence, change and resurgence of *ethnies* and with the role of the ethnic past or pasts in shaping present cultural communities" (Hutchinson and Smith 1996:10). For them, myths and symbols play a vital role in unifying populations and ensuring their continuity over many centuries. According to Hutchinson (2000), this analysis suggests that in spite of significant differences between pre-modern and modern societies, long established cultural repertoires (myths, symbols and memories) are 'carried' into the modern era by powerful institutions (states, churches, armies), and are revived and redeveloped because populations are periodically faced with similar challenges to their physical and symbolic survival (2000: 661). Nostalgia for past life-styles or memories of the golden age, symbols, myths of origin and ethnic election are some of the instruments used by the elites, most probably the intelligentsia to incite a sense of ethnic belonging.

The present study gets its inspiration for the analysis of ethnicity from the theory of Fredrik Barth. According to Barth, he and his colleagues gave particular attention to persons who *change* their ethnic identity: a discovery procedure aiming to lay bare the processes involved in the reproduction of ethnic groups (1994:11). In a paper published in 1994, Barth outlines what he calls "the points from that early work that seem best to have stood the test of time" (1994:11). The points are as follows:

1. Ethnic identity is a feature of social organisation rather than a nebulous expression of culture.
2. This means focusing on the boundary and the process of recruitment, not on the cultural stuff that the boundary encloses. Attention to these processes of boundary maintenance quickly showed that ethnic groups and their features are produced under particular interactional, historical, economic and political circumstances: they are highly *situational*, not *primordial*.
3. Being matters of identity, ethnic group membership must depend on ascription and self-ascription: only in so far as individuals embrace it, are constrained by it, act on it and experience it will ethnicity make organizational difference.
4. The cultural differences of primary significance for ethnicity are those that people use to mark the distinction, the boundary, and not the analyst's ideas of what is most aboriginal or characteristic in their culture.
5. Finally, the entrepreneurial role in ethnic politics was emphasised: how the mobilization of ethnic groups in collective action is effected by leaders who pursue a political enterprise, and is not a direct expression of the group's cultural ideology (1994:12).

The first four points are demonstrated in one of the examples of ethnic change discussed by Barth (1969:22-26, 1981:211-215):

> Perhaps the most striking case is that from Darfur provided by Haaland, which shows members of the hoe-agricultural Fur of the Sudan changing their identity to that of nomadic cattle Arabs. This process is conditional on a very specific economic circumstance: the absence of investment opportunities for capital in the village economy of the Fur in contrast to the possibilities among the nomads. Accumulated capital, and the opportunities for its management and increase, provides the incentive for Fur households to abandon their fields and villages and change to the life of the neighbouring Baggara,

> incidentally also joining one of the loose but nominally centralised Baggara political units if the change has been economically completely successful (1981:212)[32].

Commenting later in the article, Barth says "the gross mechanisms of boundary maintenance in Darfur are thus quite simple: a man has access to the critical means of production by virtue of practising a certain subsistence; this entails a whole style of life, and all these characteristics are subsumed under ethnic labels Fur and Baggara" (1981:215). In this example of the Fur and Baggara, the mode of production is the boundary that separates Fur from Baggara. This boundary can be crossed by the Fur and thereby change ethnic identity. The change from Fur to Baggara clearly affirms that ethnic identity is a feature of social organisation[33], the ethnic boundary and not the cultural content enclosed inside is foundational[34] and must be embraced by the members themselves[35]. The first four points by Barth describing ethnic formation are contained in the Fur-Baggara example. The fifth one is not apparent in this example. However, it is very important for understanding ethnicity. The role of the elite is emphatic in ethnic politics. It is the elite that are instrumental in determining whether there is ethnic harmony or conflict. The study understands ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflict in terms of these points.

5 Conclusion

In this chapter the theoretical background to the present study has been discussed. From a social psychological point of view we discussed Henry Tajfel's SIT and Jean-Claude Deschamps' SCT. According to Tajfel, social categorisation can lead to discrimination and therefore to conflict as well. As far as Deschamps is concerned, Tajfel's social categorisation is just one type of social categorisation. He calls it simple categorisation. There is another type of social categorisation called crossed categorisation, he argues. Crossed categorisation reduces discrimination and therefore waives conflict. Because simple categorisation enhances discrimination, the study classifies identity based on simple categorisation as negative

[32] To Xhosas in South Africa this sounds familiar. Some Xhosa families have lost family members who joined an ethnic group called Coloureds in the 1960s and 1970s. The incentive was better job opportunities and the second-class citizen classification than the third-class citizen classification of the Xhosas. The conversion entailed adopting Afrikaans as the first language, an Afrikaans surname and outright and vocal hostility to Xhosa traditions and customs termed *kaffir maniere*. On the 2nd of July 2011, a friend of mine on university campus attended a Xhosa traditional ritual in Eerste Rivier, one formerly Coloured residential area near Cape Town. The purpose was to apologise to the ancestors for somebody who converted and asking for readmission into the Xhosa group although this is difficult for the children because they were born into the Coloured ethnic group.

[33] It is people themselves that group together because they feel such an action will benefit them.

[34] A group which practices the same culture might still be excluded on the grounds of the created social border.

[35] An identity that is imposed on people might not sustain.

identity. It leads to exclusive identity formation. Crossed categorisation on the other hand produces accommodative identity and leads to inclusive identity formation. Another methodological tool discussed is the African ethic of Ubuntu. Because Ubuntu teaches that a person is a person through other people, it generates a complementary mode of identity formation which this study recommends for consideration in further discussions. The last methodological tool discussed is Frederik Barth's transactional ethnic theory. Barth argues that ethnicity is a socially constructed phenomenon. What sustains ethnic identity is a socially constructed social border and not the cultural contents enclosed inside the social border, argues Barth. He further emphasises the entrepreneurial role in ethnic politics. Leaders who pursue a political enterprise mobilize ethnic groups in collective action so that such mobilization is not a direct expression of the group's cultural ideology.

The motivation and the theoretical background of the study have now been discussed. The study presupposes that the literature of the Second Temple period, particularly the historiographical material, could potentially illuminate the processes of reconstruction and identity formation during this phase of the history of Israel. The expectation is to learn from the social and theological dynamics of that period for the benefit of our own quest for a theology of reconstruction in present-day (South) Africa. The study therefore now turns its attention to the historical context from which the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles emerged, as well as to other introductory questions concerning Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles.

Chapter Three

Introductory Questions concerning Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles

1 Introduction

The intention of this chapter is to explore the introductory questions concerning the narrative book of Ezra-Nehemiah on the one hand and the book of Chronicles on the other. In order to realise our intention, we first need to be conscious of a very important distinction involved in the writing of a text, namely the distinction between the context of the narrative and the context of the narrator. The researcher of biblical texts should remember that the narratives were often written down long after the events about which they tell. The context of the narrative world and the context in which the text originates should therefore be distinguished. For this reason, the structure of this chapter will include both the contexts of the narrative and that of the author(s). The historical context reflected in the narrative of Chronicles is the monarchic era of (mainly) the Judean history, while that of Ezra-Nehemiah is the early Persian era.[36] The context of the authors of both is, however, the late Persian era. Our brief overview of the historical contexts will therefore focus on the following periods: (1) The monarchic era, (2) the early Persian (Achaemenid) Empire and (3) the late Persian (Achaemenid) Empire. Other introductory issues that will be discussed will include authorship, sources, date and place and purpose.

2 Monarchic Period

The narrative in Chronicles starts from 1 Chronicles 10:1 to 2 Chronicles 36: 23. Its context is the united monarchy from the time of Saul to the fall of the Judean kingdom. Saul died in 1010 BC and in the same year David ascended the throne (Howard 1993:147). The united monarchy continued until the time of Solomon when it divided into two kingdoms, the Northern kingdom of Israel and Southern kingdom of Judah. The Northern kingdom fell in the hands of Assyria in 723/2 BC (Howard 1993:179; Cate 1994:79) while the Southern kingdom continued their existence.[37] Some of the Northerners moved down to the Southern kingdom of Judah when the Northern kingdom fell. In 597 BC the Southern kingdom of Judah was besieged by the Babylonian empire (McKenzie 2000: 747).[38] A number of Judeans

[36] Although Chronicles is later than Ezra-Nehemiah, I start with Chronicles because the context of its narrative is earlier than that of Ezra-Nehemiah.
[37] See also 2 Kings 17: 23.
[38] See also 2 Kings 24: 10-12.

were taken captive to Babylon. In 586 BC (Howard 1993:179; Cate 1994: 79) the second siege occurred and some more people were taken captive to Babylon.[39] In 582 BC a third siege occurred and even more people were taken to exile in Babylon.[40] It is the destruction of 587/6 BC that effectively marked the end of the Judean kingdom. Under David and Solomon the whole twelve tribes were under one kingdom.[41] Under David Jerusalem became capital of Israel, a state administration developed, the ark was brought back and religious policies instituted and the idea of the temple was initiated which was implemented by Solomon.

3 The Persian Empire Period (539 BC-330 BC)

When we were dealing with the context of the Chronicler's narrative, i.e. the monarchic period, we mentioned that the Northern kingdom of Israel was conquered by Assyria in 722 BC. We further mentioned that roughly one hundred and thirty six years later, in 586 BC, the Southern kingdom of Judah became a victim of the conquering power of Babylon. Forty seven years later, in 539 BC, Babylon was deposed by Persia, under King Cyrus II ("the Great") of Persia.[42] For the following two hundred and nine years, Persia was the super power of the Ancient Near East. It is this time that is the historical context of the Ezra-Nehemiah narrative, of the Ezra-Nehemiah editor(s) and of the Chronicler's author(s).

3.1 The Early Persian Period (539 BC-424 BC)

This study has divided the Persian Empire period into two phases. The first phase is the phase of progress and prosperity for the empire and its colonies. The study has bordered this period with the reign of Artaxerxes I. The second phase is the phase of decadence of the Persian Empire. The emperors associated with the early, progressive and prosperous Persian Empire period are the following: Cyrus (539 BC-530 BC), Cambyses (530 BC-516 BC), Darius (522 BC-486 BC), Xerxes (486 BC-465 BC) and Artaxerxes I (465 BC-424 BC).

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[39] See also 2 Kings 25:8.
[40] See also Jeremiah 52:30.
[41] The study is aware of Van Seters' claim that "the notion that there was originally a sacred twelve-tribe league that changed over time into a single united monarchy has been largely discredited, and what we must accept in its place is the more likely view that each of the two kingdoms evolved gradually as two distinct entities (Van Seters 2009:27).
[42] Much more is known of Cyrus after he came to the throne of Persia in 559 BC His career divides into four phases: (1) the triumphant war against Astyages and the Medes in 550 BC; (2) his successful campaigns against Lydia in 547 BC and the operations against Iona following the fall of Sardis; (3) campaigns to the northeast of the Iranian plateau between 546 and 540 BC; (4) and the conquest of Babylon in 539/538 BC (Young 1996,ABD Electronic edition).

3.1.1 Cyrus (539 BC-530 BC)

When Cyrus II[43] deposed Babylon without resistance from Babylon in 539 BC, he immediately issued the so-called Edict of Cyrus.[44] The edict entailed two things, namely; the return of the conquered nations to their native lands and the rebuilding of their ruined temples in their native lands. Berquist indicates, "Indeed, Cyrus sponsored the restoration of temple objects and he rebuilt temples throughout Babylonia, Elam and Assyria. Similarly, Cyrus also encouraged the return of foreigners, such as the Phoenicians, the Elamites and the Jews (1995:24).[45] However, Berquist qualifies this statement by saying that these emperors [Cyrus and his successor; Cambyses] did publicly profess devotion to the Persian deity Ahuramazda, but they also praised the powerful beneficence of Yahweh, Marduk[46], and other gods (Berquist 1995:25).

In the second year of Cyrus, people in Yehud started to lay the foundations of the temple, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, a descendent of King David (according to Ezra 3:8). "Their enemies" threatened them and bribed officials to frustrate their plan throughout the reign of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia (Ezra 4:5). In 530 BC, Cyrus died and was succeeded by his son Cambyses.

3.1.2 Cambyses (530 BC-516 BC)

Cambyses ascended the Persian throne in 530 BC.[47] From 530 BC to about 526 BC nothing changed from Cyrus' achievements. Only in 526 BC did Cambyses conquer Egypt, his main achievement (Grabbe 2008:268; Berquist 1995:45), thus closing the chapter of powerful contemporary kingdoms of the Middle East.[48]The period of no conquests meant no revenue

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[43] From now on, he will just be referred to as Cyrus.

[44] Ezra 1:2-4 (in Hebrew) and 6:3-5 (in Aramaic). It is also quoted in 2 Chronicles 36:22-23. Although the historicity of both of these documents has rightly been questioned, Cyrus also erected a cylinder with similar information (Berquist 1995:24).

[45] Sharing the same information, Grabbe says: "In sum, it is likely that the descendents of deported peoples were allowed to return to their homelands and to rebuild ruined temples, along the lines of the Babylonian Chronicles and the Cyrus Cylinder pronouncements. But this allowance was part of a general policy on the part of Cyrus, of which the Jews were able to take advantage. It seems very unlikely that in his first year of reign, with all that had to be done in establishing a new empire, Cyrus took the time to issue an edict expressly on behalf of a small ethnic group" (Grabbe 2004:275). According to Ezra 1:1, this happened "in order that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished." Berquist concludes that Cyrus' interest was the enhanced control of the empire, not the religious freedom of his subjects. The mode of Cyrus' control of resources reflects the imperial organisation in the time of his reign (Berquist 1995:25).

[46] That is, a Babylonian god.

[47] He followed the Elamite custom of marrying his sisters, Atossa and Roxana. This centralised power for Cambyses by denying himself any brothers-in-law or nephews who could serve as loci for power plays against the imperial throne. He took the further step of murdering his brother Bardiya (Berquist 1995:45).

[48] When Cyrus ascended the throne in 559 BC, the super powers of the Ancient Near East (ANE) were Media, Lydia, Babylonia and Egypt. By 525 BC, the Persians had no more neighbours in the Middle East, the ancient

from outside and therefore taxes and tributes rose to the dissatisfaction of the subjects. However, after conquering Egypt, Cambyses attempted to expand his gains in new directions. He continued the expansion of the empire: Egypt, Cyprus and the Greek islands fell in quick succession, but the Persians were stopped at Nubia (Stone 2000:1033). Since the conquest of Egypt, he stayed there while busy with battles in that region. In 522 BC he received bad news that somebody is impersonating Bardiya (Smerdis in Greek),[49] his brother, whom he murdered. En route back to Persia from Egypt to crush the rebellion, Cambyses either committed suicide or was accidentally killed (Young 2000, ABD electronic edition). The exact cause of his death is uncertain because of differing traditions (Grabbe 2008:268; Stone 2000:1033). In the mean time, Darius led a party of seven noble Persians who conspired to remove the impostor. They succeeded and by some means or other, one was chosen to be king, the one who took the name Darius (Grabbe 2004:268). By this time it was fifteen years since the reconstruction of the temple in Yehud was halted.

3.1.3 Darius (522 BC-486 BC)

Darius' great-great-grandfather was Cyrus' great-grandfather. The ancestor Cyrus and Darius shared was Teispes, the son of Achaemenes, the founder of the Achaemenid dynasty, hence the Achaemenid Empire (Breneman: 1993:17). Darius differed from Cyrus and Cambyses in that he was a better administrator. He divided the Persian Empire into twenty administrative and military satrapies (provinces) (Grabbe 2004:268). The Babylonian Empire that remained as it was during the time of Cyrus and Cambyses was divided into smaller provinces by Darius. Like his predecessors, Darius did not discourage the subject nations from worshiping their own gods. It was in the reign of Darius that the temple in Jerusalem was completed. The building of the temple "was discontinued until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia" (Ezra 4:24), and "this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius" (Ezra 6:15). It took twenty one years to reconstruct the temple, from the time they started in the second year of Cyrus until the time of completion in the sixth year of Darius. When the reconstruction resumed in the second year of Darius, and continued uninterrupted, it took them four years, from 520 BC to 516 BC (the sixth year from 522 BC). Darius' contributions to Yehud and the development of Jewish religious tradition are vast. The time of Darius also saw the writing of at least three prophetic texts from the

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kingdoms of Media, Lydia, Babylonia, and Egypt had been transformed into satrapies administrated by the Persians (Briant 1996, ABD Electronic edition).

[49] Stone (2000) claims this was Gaumata who claimed to be Bardiya (Smerdis) who was killed by Cambyses in 526 (2000:1033). Berquist confirms the side of the story told by Stone. But, he also reveals another side that Bardiya might have not been murdered but waited in hiding for the right moment.

Hebrew Bible: Haggai, Zechariah 1-8 and Isaiah 56-66 (Berquist 1995:24). During Darius' reign, the Greek settlements in Asia Minor rebelled against the Persian Empire. They were brought under control, but Darius then attempted to take the Greek mainland. He was defeated at the famous battle of Marathon in 490 BC (Breneman 1993:21).

3.1.4 Xerxes

Xerxes is also known as Ahasuerus. He is mentioned once in the book of Ezra: "In the reign of Ahasuerus in his accession year, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem" (Ezra 4:6). The writer of Ezra did not consider the historical chronology in this verse. In the text Xerxes precedes Darius while historically he succeeds Darius (Howard 1993:285). Xerxes also appears in the story of Esther. Berquist (1995) describes Xerxes' reign as a reign remembered from Greek perspective, as Persia battled its western neighbours for control of the borders between them (Berquist 1995:24). Despite Greek victories in these battles, Persia remained a powerful force. Greece was becoming quite a force to reckon with, although she did not match the immensity of Persia. Xerxes maintained most of the policies that Darius had developed internally. As conquests became less frequent for Persia, pressure for funds grew. To face that challenge, Xerxes had to increase taxation from the existing colonies. To save money he also reduced spending by abandoning some of Darius' projects. According to Berquist, "Yehud under Xerxes' reign experienced less of the construction and imperial support than the colony had known during Darius' time" (1995:24). The book of Malachi is a product of this period. Religion became much more of a voluntary part of a pluralistic lifestyle within a huge and diverse empire. This new feature of Yahwistic religion transformed its practice, as can be seen through the community's struggles in this period (Berquist 1995:24). According to Grabbe, "[a]n image of Xerxes as a weak character whose reign marked the start of a decadent Persian court has been presented by many modern histories, though this view has been partially justified from the classical sources. … He was assassinated in a palace coup in 465 BC" (Grabbe 2004:268).

3.1.5 Artaxerxes I (465 BC-424 BC)

Like Ahasuerus, Artaxerxes I is mentioned before Darius and before the completion of the temple in Ezra. He is referred to in Ezra 4:8, indicating that Rehum the royal deputy and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes. In the beginning of his reign Artaxerxes I had to put down a number of revolts. In 460 BC Egypt rebelled and it became a big revolt because Greece sent a fleet in assistance of Egypt. Ultimately Megabyzus managed to suppress the revolt. By 454 BC, Egypt was back under Persian control. The

Greek wars started by Darius and continued against increasing odds by Xerxes continued to occupy the imperial attention. Throughout the imperial colonies, local matters drew ever less attention from the empire's core and the local governors took on ever greater powers in their limited rule. This is the time of Ezra's and Nehemiah's missions to Jerusalem. In the seventh year of Artaxerxes Ezra and other men of Israel went up to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:7).[50] In 458 BC Ezra was commanded by the king: "And you, Ezra, according to the God-given wisdom you possess, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people in the province Beyond the River who know the laws of your God; and you shall teach those who do not know them. All who will not obey the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be strictly executed on them, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of their goods or for imprisonment" (Ezra 7:25-26). In 445 BC it was Nehemiah who was, due to his request to the king, sent to fix the walls of Jerusalem and to act as governor.

3.2 Late Persian Period (424 BC-330 BC)

The emperors who ruled during this period are Darius II, *Ochus* (424-404 BC); Artaxerxes II, *Mnemon* (404-359 BC); Artaxerxes III, *Ochus* (359-338 BC); Artaxerxes IV, *Arses* (338-336 BC) and Darius III, *Codommanus* (336-330 BC).

In our discussion below, when we deal with the date of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles, we will indicate that this study identifies this period as the period in which these books might have been completed. It therefore means that this period is the supposed socio-historical context of the editor(s)/author(s) of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. The above early Persian period is the historical setting of Ezra-Nehemiah as a text and the monarchic period is the socio-historical setting of the narrative of Chronicles, but the editor(s)/author(s) belong to this later Persian period. The unfortunate situation is that very little is known about this very important period for the study of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. The general picture though is that the Persian Empire declined during this last century.

The wars with Greece continued and intensified. Economic problems became more acute. The pluralism of the empire increased, especially as areas such as Yehud experienced a greater mix of Greek and Persian Empire cultural influences (Berquist 1995:121). Culturally, the impact of other regions upon Yehud's culture would have grown. The Egyptian

[50] This indication is the commonly accepted view of the date of Ezra. However, on account of the fact that the biblical record reflects almost no acquaintance between the contemporaries Ezra and Nehemiah, some have suggested alternative dates for Ezra. One alterntive view is that Ezra went up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes II, i.e. 398 BC.

influences during 401-380 BC would have provided new cultural inputs into Yehudite society. Greek trade would have brought new technology, new styles and new ideas into the cultural milieu of Yehud. Berquist concludes by saying:

> [T]he religious life of Yehud during the final century of Persian rule would have been affected by the relative autonomy of the colony. Persian control mechanisms were breaking down, and after the interventions of Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes I there are no obvious references to Persian imperial interference with Yehud's free practice of its religion. In all likelihood, this would have increased the variety of expression of that worship, since there would have been no external pressure to choose one type of religious practice over another. Pluralism in religion, especially in the light of an influx of Greek thought, would have flourished as the Persian Empire's influence ended (Berquist 1995:126).

This may be one of the reasons for the fact that different books with different theological expositions and viewpoints emerged from this period.

4 Authorship

Frank Charles Fensham (1982) opens the section on authorship of Ezra-Nehemiah with the following statement: "This is one of the most difficult problems of OT research" (1982:1). Taking into account the complexity of the matter, this is a proper description of the topic. This issue of authorship is not a closed matter yet although it has been debated for quite a while. In order to account for the complexity of the matter, the issue of authorship has to be examined in relation to the issue of the unity of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles respectively, as well as their relation to one another.

A crucial point is that whatever view one takes in the debate on authorship of these books, it influences how the researcher will perceive matters arising out of further investigation of the books. The position this study takes in regard to the viewpoints that emerge from the debate on authorship is also determinative of the arguments that the study will produce. In other words, this chapter is a preliminary historical analysis preparing for subsequent chapters five and six, which will analyse the ideologies of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles as manifested in references to the Temple and the concept of "all Israel".

4.1 Unity of Ezra-Nehemiah

Breneman indicates: "Some scholars have considered Ezra and Nehemiah to have been written as two separate books, authored by Ezra and Nehemiah respectively. However, most scholars believe it more likely that Ezra-Nehemiah was compiled as one book by Ezra, Nehemiah or someone else, using the memoirs along with other sources" (1993:37). Those

who argue for the division of Ezra-Nehemiah base their arguments on external and internal factors to the book (Eskenazi 1988:12). The main argument from external factors is the fact that Ezra and Nehemiah as individual figures are dealt with separately "in all other extant ancient literature" (Eskenazi 1988:12).[51]

The main argument from internal factors is that there are "diverse and clearly separable sources" (Eskenazi 1988:12-13) in Ezra-Nehemiah.[52] The presence of two memoirs and the repetition of the list of returnees represent the most widely held rationale for dividing Ezra-Nehemiah. However, Eskenazi (1988) satisfactorily waives this argument when she says:

> I consider Ezra-Nehemiah to be a single work. To interpret the text in the wholeness of its present canonical shape is not to ignore the fissures within the book. However, it is to insist that the transmitted unity take precedence in the interpretation (Eskenazi 1988:13).

In fact, the unity of Ezra-Nehemiah is attested in all ancient manuscripts available and in the early rabbinic[53] and patristic traditions. Ezra-Nehemiah forms a single book in the oldest extant Hebrew manuscripts[54] and in the earliest church fathers[55] (Pfeiffer 1952:813; Myers 1965: xxxviii; Childs 1979:626; Fensham 1982:1; Williamson 1985:xxi; Holmgren 1987:xiii; Eskenazi 1988:11; Breneman 1993:37). The oldest manuscripts of the LXX[56] treat Ezra-Nehemiah as one book, called *Esdras B* (Yamauchi 1988; Breneman 1993:37). Origen (3rd century AD) was the first to divide Ezra-Nehemiah into two books. He did however acknowledge the fact that they appeared as one (Williamson 1985: xxi; Eskenazi 1988:11; Breneman 1993:37; Klein 1999:663). Jerome endorsed this division and used it in the Vulgate. In his *Prologus galeatus* he acknowledges their unity in the Hebrew tradition, however (Williamson 1985: xxi). So, "while the evidence on which these opinions are based will naturally occupy our attention later, it is worth observing at the outset that none of them has tradition on its side. Jewish tradition is clear in its opinion that these works were originally one, and that they were to be regarded as separate from other books (Williamson 1985: xxi). For this study, the transmitted unity takes precedence in the interpretation and

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[51] Sirach (Sir 49:12b-13) and 2 Maccabees (2 Macc 1:18, 20-36) mention Nehemiah but not Ezra. 1 Esdras accounts only for the activities of Ezra and replicates in a continuous story material which is dispersed in Ezra-Nehemiah. Josephus mentions both men but keeps their activities and careers apart.

[52] Those are the Nehemiah memoirs (encompassing most of Neh 1:1-7:5, 13:4-31), Ezra memoirs (encompassing at least Ezra 7:27-9:15), Aramaic documents (Ezra 4:7-24a; 4:24b-6:18; 7:12-26), Lists and genealogies (Ezra 2//Nehemiah 7; Ezra 8:1-14; 10:18-43; Nehemiah 3:1-32; 10:2-28; 11:3-36; 12:1-26) and other Hebrew sources and materials.

[53] T.B. *Baba Bathra*

[54] Aleppo Codex (930 CE) and Leningrad Codex (1008 CE)

[55] Melito of Sardis and Eusebius

[56] Vaticanus, Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus

therefore this study supports the position that Ezra-Nehemiah is a unity. The view of the study is that Ezra-Nehemiah is one book by the same editor(s). The different parts of the book may have been written at different times by different authors, but were then edited into one corpus. Referring to arguments for the division of Ezra-Nehemiah, Williamson (1985) observes that none of them have tradition on their side (Williamson 1985:xxi). He further argues that "the Masoretes clearly regard the books as one because they count Nehemiah 3:22 as the middle verse and add their annotations for the whole only at the end of Nehemiah (Williamson 1985:xxi; Klein 1999:663).

4.2 Unity of Chronicles

According to Weanzana: "The book of Chronicles was not originally separated into two parts; it was one book called 'The Events of the Days', meaning that it records events that were considered significant in the annals of the time" (2006:467; see also Braun 1986: xix; Japhet 1993:2; Tuell 2001:2;[57]). The division into two parts was first made in the Septuagint and was maintained from then on in the other translations (Braun 1986: xix; Japhet 1993:2; Tuell 2001:2; Weanzana 2006:467).The traditional Masoretic remarks regarding the count of its verses and its middle point are found only at the end of II Chronicles (Japhet 1993:2). Scholars disagree about the compositional history of Chronicles though. Some believe that the book underwent a priestly, Levitical or Deuteronomistic redaction (Knoppers 2000:242). This is an attempt to account for the heterogeneity of Chronicles, by seeing its composition as evolving in well-defined stages (Japhet 1993:2). Major passages still in dispute include the following: the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9; portions of 1 Chronicles 15-16; 1 Chr 23:3-27:34 (Williamson 1982:14); and 2 Chr 36:22-23.[58] The theological theme of "all Israel" which is inclusive of non-Judahite/Benjaminite tribes is pervasive in Chronicles from beginning to end. Referring to the same theological theme of "all Israel", Sparks expresses a sentiment to the same effect when he says this is suggested not only in the genealogies (1 Chr. 9:3), but also in the narrative of Chronicles (2 Chr. 30:1, 10, 18; 31:1; 34:9) (Sparks 2008:367). In fact, for Sparks, the purpose of Chronicles is the cult: "This study has made clear that the purpose of the genealogies, indeed the purpose of the book of Chronicles as a whole, is to encourage and support the work of the proper cultic officials, performing the proper cultic duties, in the proper cultic place" (2008:367). This statement asserts the

[57]It should be noted however that, in the case of Tuell, the unity of Chronicles is attached to the assumed common authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, which shall be disputed by this study in the next section.
[58]2 Chr 36:22–23 is also attached to the assumed common authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah

pervasiveness of a theme from beginning to end. This characteristic of a pervasive theme from beginning to end reinforces the idea of unity in Chronicles for this study. According to Knoppers, "arguments for pervasive disunity fail to come to full grips with the distinctive features of the Chronicler's compositional technique: his adroitness in drawing upon originally disparate lemmata, his ability to acknowledge and negotiate different ideological perspectives, and his capacity for pursuing his own agenda as he engages a variety of earlier biblical traditions" (2004:92). The possibility of secondary elaboration during the course of transmission is not ruled out, however (Williamson 1982:14; Japhet 1993:7; Knoppers 2004:92). Rather than an indelible mark of literary disunity, these passages evince the author's concern to mediate different perspectives within the context of the late Persian period or early Hellenistic period (Knoppers 2004:92). Japhet states the following, which also represents the view of this study: "While the possibility of secondary elaboration during the course of transmission was not ruled out, it seems that a better explanation of the book's variety and composition is the view that it is one work, composed essentially by a single author, with a very distinct and peculiar literary method" (1993:2).

4.3 Unity of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles

There is no indication in the early lists of biblical books that early collections counted these books as one. The church fathers kept them distinct, and so did the rabbis (Eskenazi 1988:11). Although there were some who earlier hinted at the idea that Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah were originally all parts of the same work, it was Leopold Zunz, in 1832, who set out the evidence which, with later additions and refinements, convinced a majority of scholars about the unity of Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah (Williamson 1977:5; Eskenazi 1988:11; Klein 1999:663; Tuell 2001:8). The unity of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah is based primarily on four main arguments:

- Doublet in 2 Chronicles (36:22-23 and Ezra 1:1-3);
- Same style, vocabulary and language;[59]
- Same ideology;[60]
- 1 Esdras.[61]

[59] Referring to things like unique expressions, new meanings to old words, absorption of foreign words into the language etc.

[60] David and Solomon, Emphasis on the Cult, Genealogies, Retribution, Concept of Israel and Anti-Samaritan Polemic.

[61] Josiah's reign (cf. Chronicles), return (cf. Ezra) and Feast of Tabernacles (cf. Nehemiah 8).

This view on the unity of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles has been challenged by a number of scholars. In the discussion below of the four main arguments in favour of the unity, the critical arguments brought against them will also be listed, and indication will be given of the view held in this study.

4.3.1 Doublet in 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 and Ezra 1:1-3

Some scholars explain the parallel as deliberate markings signalling continuity when Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles were being divided (Eskenazi 1988:17). However, Williamson (1977) argues that the identity of authorship is not the only logical conclusion one can draw from this overlap. In fact, some have even taken it to imply precisely the reverse, he argues (Williamson 1977:7). Eskenazi concurs with Williamson that this doublet might be due to a deliberate borrowing of the beginning of Ezra-Nehemiah by the Chronicler to form the conclusion of Chronicles in order to provide a hopeful ending to the book.

Howard Jr (1993) is also against the idea that the doublet signals continuity between Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. Concerning the "tag-line at the end of Chronicles and beginning of Ezra-Nehemiah," he argues, "this is not as persuasive an argument for unity as some would posit. That is because other OT books that almost certainly shared the same author -such as 1 & 2 Samuel or 1 & 2 Kings, or even perhaps, 2 Samuel and 1 Kings - do not have such a tag-line" (Howard 1993:237). This study also assumes that the doublet is due to the Chronicler using Ezra-Nehemiah as a source, as it will be argued below (with Allen 1999:300).

4.3.2 Similarity in style, vocabulary and language

The argument that there are similarities between Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles in style, vocabulary and language, which could suggest the personal stamp of one author, was strongly challenged by Sarah Japhet in her *The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Investigated Anew* (1968). She argues that the research of many scholars resulted in that Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles belong to the same linguistic stratum[62] which includes Daniel, Esther and Ecclesiastes. While the argument of the proponents of the unity of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles is based on similarities, she investigated the differences. She discovered three categories of evidence revealing differences, namely linguistic opposition, specific technical terms, and peculiarities of style. Below is an outline of these categories:

[62] Late biblical Hebrew (LBH) which differs in many important respects from preexilic Hebrew.

4.3.2.1 Linguistic opposition

Japhet explores the grammatical realities of the use of the short and full forms of the imperfect. She asserts that in late biblical Hebrew (LBH), the distinction between the short form and the full form of the imperfect is gradually lost, resulting in the alternating of the two forms in forming an imperfect consecutive. She gives לעיו and הלעיו as an example. She then makes the following observations:

a. Formation of the imperfect consecutive: Chronicles uses a rigid and uniform method, namely the short form, in contrast to the plurality of forms and the absence of a clear method in Ezra-Nehemiah;
b. The lengthened imperfect consecutive: The Chronicler does not even once lengthen a full form found in his sources. This is a rigid and uniform method, in contrast to the plurality of forms and absence of a clear method in Ezra-Nehemiah;
c. Theophoric names ending with והי: We find the long form with והי before the exile and the short form with הי after the exile. Ezra-Nehemiah uses the short form, ending with **הי,** uniformly, as against a diversity and plurality of forms in Chronicles.

4.3.2.2 Specific technical terms

Foreign terms taken from the realm of government and administration entered the language and became a living part thereof. Most of the terms were thoroughly absorbed into the language and their use in Ezra-Nehemiah is widespread and natural. For example, מינגס and החפare loan words from Accadian and הנידמ (Aramaic) is an administrative unit in the Persian Empire. In Chronicles there is not even a trace of these terms.

4.3.2.3 Peculiarities of style

Japhet gives thirteen words and phrases used in Chronicles in a manner one does not find in Ezra-Nehemiah, e.g., היה דחפ לע הוהי (The fear of the Lord fell upon), תונבל תיב משל הוהי (to build a house for the name of the Lord).

She again gives eight words and phrases used in Ezra-Nehemiah in a way one does not find in Chronicles, e.g., הבוטה יהולא דיכ ילע (The hand of my God was good upon me), תיב הוהי רשא מלשוריב (The house of God which is in Jerusalem).

In conclusion, Japhet declares that, from a linguistic point of view, the book of Chronicles deviates in some important points from the tendencies and phenomena of its period, which are extant in Ezra-Nehemiah.

Finally, Knoppers observes that "Ezra - Nehemiah evinces a consistent typology: project, opposition, and eventual success, but this dialectical view of history in which one problem (rebuilding Jerusalem's temple) after another (rebuilding Jerusalem's walls) is engaged and surmounted is said to be uncharacteristic of Chronicles" (2000:242).

4.3.3 Similarity in ideology

Another argument forwarded to support the unity of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles is that they share the same theology, ideology and interests. In some respects they do share similar interests, for example, they both venerate the name of the one and the only God, the God of Israel, who brought them out of captivity. Howard Jr indicates: "Both 1 & 2 Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah were postexilic works, and both display strong interests in matters of Temple worship, religious officials, and genealogical continuities" (1993:237). These interests are often those that would doubtless have been shared by most of the Jews living in Jerusalem at the time, admits Williamson (1977:60). This, however, does not necessarily prove the same authorship.

This section will be dealing with the ideological similarities of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles which are often indicated to be signs of unity and same authorship. Particularly, three topics, namely the cult, genealogies and relationships will be discussed. The discussion will also indicate that these similarities are no unequivocal proofs of unity and same authorship.

4.3.3.1 The cult

Reflections of the cult is one of the reasons why some scholars purport the idea that Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles were written by the same author. However, Eskenazi (1988) further notices that much preoccupation with the cult and the temple is noticeable in other postexilic writings as well, for example, Ezekiel, Haggai and Zechariah. This, she interprets as an attestation to the lively interest in the cult at the time of the Second Temple and that this issue therefore does not necessarily denote same authorship.

Another interesting issue is the question of the Levites. As much as both books might use the same terminology, they do not always agree on the cultic details, in this case, the status of the Levites. Examining the portrayal of the Levites in different books, Lisbeth Fried (2000) draws a separating line in this regard. Regarding Ezra-Nehemiah as an earlier writing than Chronicles, she confidently states that prior to the time of the Chronicler we have a different picture. During the time of Nehemiah it is still the Levite headed by an Aaronide priest who

collects the tithes throughout the towns. More importantly, there is a distinction between the priests who do the temple work (Neh. 11:12) and the Levites who do the work external to the temple. In Chronicles, the Levites assisted the Aaronide priests in the temple. They occupy prominent positions like teaching, judging, prophetic functions, interpreting and copying the law etcetera. (Williamson 1977:69; Fried 2000:804). In Chronicles, the Levites, singers and gatekeepers are counted together while in Ezra-Nehemiah they are counted separately (Eskenazi 1988:24; Fried 2000:804). These counter-arguments negate the argument for same authorship.

4.3.3.2 Genealogies

Genealogies are another literary or oral device to project ideological feelings. According to the study conducted by Robert R Wilson, anthropologists discovered that in tribal societies genealogies are frequently employed to express social and political relationships between tribes (Wilson 1977:4). The issue of relationships is therefore central in genealogies.[63] A genealogy is defined as "a written or oral expression of the descent of a person or persons from an ancestor or ancestors" (Wilson 1977:9). When a genealogy expresses more than one line of descent from a given ancestor, then it will exhibit segmentation or branching: a segmented genealogy. Each of its component lines or branches is called a segment. If a genealogy expresses only one line of descent from a given ancestor, then it will exhibit no segmentation and that is a linear genealogy (Wilson 1977:9; Thompson 1994:24).[64] The "segmented" or "mixed" forms display breadth or a "tree" to express relationships between the various branches of a family. They were also used to demonstrate existing relations between Israel and neighbouring tribes with whom there was some degree of kinship. The "linear" form displays depth and seeks to legitimize an individual by relating him to an ancestor whose status has been established (Eskenazi 1988:25; Thompson 1994:25-26; Chavalas 2000:490).Through genealogies, a person receives his status, his rights and obligations, by virtue of the kinship ties that link him to the other people with whom he comes in contact (Wilson 1977:18).[65]

In addition to segmentation and depth (linearity) as characteristics of oral genealogies, Wilson brings in a third characteristic which is very important, namely the fluidity of genealogies (Wilson 1977:27). Fluidity is the changing of oral genealogies due to a change in

[63] This also applies to the concept of identity which is one the *foci* of this study.
[64] Thompson also calls the segmented genealogies "mixed" genealogies.
[65] This might be true of tribes as well. A tribe may receive its status, its rights and obligations, by virtue of the kinship ties that link it to the other tribes with which it comes in contact.

lineage. Lineages may change rapidly under certain conditions, and as a result, the genealogies too may fluctuate within a relatively brief period of time (Wilson 1977:27). This process of genealogical adjustment may take place in several ways. In some cases, genealogical adjustments are made secretly by a small group of people who "own" the genealogy (Wilson 1977:27). Names may be shifted from one position to another in the genealogy in order to orientate the relationship of that name to other names. A name can be added as well to give a new picture to the relationships. A name can also disappear to eliminate unwanted relationships. Mark Chavalas (2000) echoes Wilson when he describes genealogies as they were changed when their function changed. Some names of ancestors disappeared (when they no longer had a relevant function) while others were added. Thus, genealogical function varied depending upon the circumstance (Chavalas 2000:490).

To understand genealogies, this study prefers the anthropological approach than the historiographical approach. This means, the study perceives the genealogies in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles in terms of their function of expressing social and political relationships between tribes, rather than in terms of their historicity.

In positing a common authorship of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah, scholars have traditionally cited similar interests in genealogies and lists (Knoppers 2004:80). It is, indeed, an undeniable fact that both Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles use genealogies as literary genres although genealogies are found in the Pentateuch and Ruth as well. However, genealogies, as literary tools, are also indicators of different authorship in this case. Chronicles mostly uses segmented genealogies, although not exclusively, while Ezra-Nehemiah strictly uses linear genealogies. Of utmost importance at this juncture is to prove an assertion which was made in the opening sentence of this chapter, namely, genealogies are also devices to project ideological feelings. James T. Sparks (2008) dedicated more than three hundred and fifty pages to the genealogies in 1 Chronicles (Sparks 2008).[66] He concluded that the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9 point to the cult and the cultic leaders as their focal point. However, he makes some remarks that are relevant for our discussion as well. Looking at two phrases, "and in Jerusalem they stayed" (1 Chr. 9:2) and "they stayed in Jerusalem" (1 Chr. 9:34), he notices "an *inclusio* which seeks to emphasize that all those incorporated by it (Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, priests, Levites and gatekeepers) dwelt in Jerusalem. This is shown to be the rightful dwelling place not just of some, but of "all Israel" (Sparks

[66] 1 Chronicles 1:1-9:44.

2008:351). Then, at the end of his study, Sparks poses rhetorical questions which imply what is entailed in the previous statement.[67]This idea is echoed when Thompson (1994) summarizes a paragraph on the functions of genealogies by saying "they provided support for the 'all Israel' concept so important to the Chronicler" (1994:27). As much as the argument has focused on Chronicles, the same can be said of Ezra-Nehemiah. The parallel of 1 Chronicles 9 is Nehemiah 11: "Both profess to be lists of Jerusalem dwellers in the postexilic province of Yehud (1 Chr. 9:3; Neh. 11:3)" (Sparks 2008:334). In Chronicles Ephraim and Manasseh are included while in Nehemiah they are excluded. Referring to these two texts (1 Chr. 9 and Neh. 11), Knoppers observes that "the differences between the catalogues enables one to see how the editors of each work have each gone their own way with earlier material. Each has contextualised, edited, and supplemented the catalogue according to his own interests. … Given the significant dissimilarities between the two registers in content and in development, it is unlikely that the editors (or authors) of the two works were identical" (2004:80). The conclusion is that these respective genealogies reveal different authors with different ideologies.

4.3.3.3 Relationships

The topic of relationships will be divided into two sections. The first one is the attitude towards the neighbouring ethnic groups. The second one is an attitude towards the Northerners. In the introduction it was stated that a standpoint that one takes on the introductory issues about Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles determines the route s/he will follow in understanding these books.

Nehemiah 13:26 bears testimony to the thought expressed in the above statement. It is this verse, coupled with the status Solomon enjoys in Chronicles that made Braun (1986) wonder about the common authorship of these corpora. While admitting that many themes and much common vocabulary, style and syntax are common to Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, Braun also finds sizeable divergences (1986:xx). In particular, Braun fails to understand how

[67] Finally, the Chronicler's genealogies raise important questions in relation to the status of non Judahites/Benjaminites within the postexilic community. This is true not only from the presence of foreigners in the Judahite genealogy itself, but also the inclusion of those tribes which made up "Israel", the traditional Deutoronomistic enemy of Judah. Were there those who claimed descent from these groups who sought to attach themselves to the postexilic temple community? Was this, in fact, an attempt to include the worshippers of Yahweh from Samaria who, in some way, professed to be the religious, if not the physical, descent of Israel (2 Kings 17:24-41; Ezra 4:2)? This is suggested not only in the genealogies (1 Chr. 9:3), but also in the narratives of Chronicles (2 Chr. 30:1, 10, 18; 31:1; 34:9). Who was this "Ephraim and Manasseh" who were part of the postexilic community if not those who worshipped Yahweh in that territory once known by that name? And if they worshipped Yahweh in that territory, does not that make them part of "all Israel", and therefore entitled to enter into the community, and worship Yahweh in the temple? (Sparks 2008:367).

Chronicles, which praises Solomon, can share an author with Ezra-Nehemiah which despises Solomon (Neh. 13:26). Thompson (1994) also expresses a feeling to that effect when identifying the assessment of Solomon as an important theological difference between Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles (1994:29). Tuell (2001) also argues that "Ezra-Nehemiah's rejection of foreign marriages is difficult to reconcile with Chronicles' tolerance of Solomon's Egyptian wife (Tuell 2001:8).[68] The crucial concern for this study is the foreign women that Solomon married and the response of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles thereto. The question can be rephrased as follows: How can Chronicles be tolerant to foreign marriages and Ezra-Nehemiah be extremely against foreign marriages and the two still share the same author.[69] The attitude towards foreign marriages represents an attitude towards the neighboring ethnic groups.[70] David Janzen (2008) tries to find an explanation why foreign women were expelled in Ezra 9-10. He argues that:

> three basic types of explanations in particular can be identified: the divorces and expulsions were mandated because (1) the community was attempting to prevent widespread apostasy caused by these foreign women; (2) the community was hoping clearly to define its ethnic identity; and (3) there were economic and/or political factors that would benefit some or all of the community should these women be forced to leave (Janzen 2008:49).

He also indicates that there are some scholars' explanations which do not neatly fit into the above categories but for ease of presentation, he demarcates the bounds of discussion. He finds some fault with all these explanations: "All of them presume that Ezra 9-10 obscures or omits the community's rationale for the expulsion" (2008:59). He then gives his own explanation, which he claims to be found right in the text. The answer for him is that the community is "described as 'the holy seed' that dwells in 'his (God's) holy place' and that it has been charged with causing foreign women to dwell in this place" (2008:61). The nature of these women is that "they are polluting women (הדנ) who have polluted the land with their impurity (האמט, 9:11)" (2008:61). The study perceives this as a theological explanation which deserves to be respected as religious obedience to the deity. However, this is not the point currently. The point is that all these explanations, including Janzen's, confirm that there is an exclusive and intolerant attitude in Ezra 9-10, which contrasts with the inclusive and tolerant

[68] Tuell is the supporter of the unity of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. However, the fact that he recognizes that Ezra-Nehemiah's rejection of foreign marriages is difficult to reconcile with Chronicles' tolerance of Solomon's Egyptian wife is important for this study, although he tries to explain it away by the different eras described in these books.

[69] Solomon is mentioned by name in Nehemiah 13:26 as a sinner.

[70] The Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites (Ezra 9:1).

attitude found in Chronicles (cf. 1 Chr. 9:3-34). This argument emphasises two different authors for these two different books.

When the preceding discussion was introduced, a significant statement was made. The statement asserts that a standpoint that one takes on the introductory issues concerning Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles determines the route s/he will follow in understanding these books. The same view is expressed in the following statement:

> It is not surprising that those who believe that Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles originally formed one historical work regard the Chronicler's attitude to the North as negative: the true Israel consists of Judah and Benjamin; thus e.g. Von Rad, *Geschichtsbild*, 24. If Chronicles is no longer connected with Ezra-Nehemiah and the inquiry is confined to Chronicles, an entirely different view presents itself (Dirksen 2005:15).

Dirksen continues to describe Israel as "the entire kingdom of the twelve tribes" in principle for the Chronicler (2005:15). "Though the North was renegade in its rejection of the Davidic dynasty and of the Jerusalem temple, which is made clear in the speech of Abijah (II 13:4-12), the way back remains open (II 30:6-9; cf. II 19:4)" (Dirksen 2005:15). In 2 Chronicles 30:1 it is stated that "Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover to the Lord the God of Israel". In 1 Chronicles 9:3, the Chronicler reports that "... some of the people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh lived in Jerusalem". This leads us now back to the question which was asked by Sparks, namely who was this "Ephraim and Manasseh" who were part of the post exilic community if not those who worshipped Yahweh in that territory once known by that name (Sparks 2008:367)? Miller, while describing the interconnectedness between Ephraim and Manasseh, finishes by indicating that Ephraim eventually came to designate the entire northern kingdom of Israel (Miller 2000:416). Miller continues to indicate that while some passages speak of the land of "Ephraim and Manasseh" as a territorial designation,[71] in many prophetic passages "Ephraim" alone designates the socio-political entity of the northern kingdom (Miller 2000:416).[72] The point of this discussion is to prove what Dirksen said above that, when Chronicles is disconnected from Ezra-Nehemiah, the picture of Chronicles about the Northerners changes. Dirksen also indicated that for those who believe in a single author for Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles, the true Israel consists of Judah and Benjamin. This is the

[71] Deut. 34:2; 2 Chron. 30:10.
[72] Is. 7:2-17; 9:9, 21 [MT 8, 20]; 11:13; Jer. 31:9-20; Ezek. 37:16-19.

picture we get when we look at Nehemiah 11:4,[73] which is the parallel of 1 Chronicles 9:3. This discussion proves that Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles are not by the same author.

Lastly, the relationship with the Northerners has also been referred to as the Samaritan polemic. The argument forwarded by Klein (1996) clarifies the Samaritan polemic issue. According to Klein, "earlier scholars found one of the principal themes of the book to be its anti-Samaritan attitude. This has now been called into question because of the late date currently assigned to the Samaritan schism and the distinction between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah. There is also a far more open attitude to the North in Chronicles than was previously recognized" (Klein 1996, ABD Electronic edition; cf. also Grabbe 2004:99).

4.3.4 First Book of Esdras

Tuell (2001) represents a number of scholars who feel 1 Esdras is evidence that the author of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles is the same. The supposition made by Tuell that 1 Esdras may be a fragment of an original Chronicler's History is what Knoppers calls the fragmentary hypothesis (2004:58): "One of the major arguments by proponents of the fragmentary hypothesis is weak, namely that the beginning and ending of 1 Esdras bear marks of being excerpted from a much longer work. Literary treatments of 1 Esdras have succeeded in demonstrating that the work has an integrity and a coherence of its own" (Knoppers 2004:58; see also Williamson 2004:300). Knoppers concludes by suggesting that if proponents of the fragmentary hypothesis are to succeed, they will have to make their case on other grounds (2004:58). It is also important to note Knoppers when he says even if 1 Esdras were a fragment of a longer translation, this would not in and of itself prove that Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah were originally a single work (Knoppers 2004:58).

The alternative hypothesis to the fragmentary hypothesis is that "1 Esdras is complete as it stands.[74] It is a compilation of extracts from the books of Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, which were already in their present form at the time of writing, together with other material" (Williamson 2004:300).What has been said by Knoppers above is repeated in Williamson when he suggests that if the findings of a study by Van der Kooij are right, "then the 'fragment hypothesis' of 1 Esdras will have to be abandoned" (Williamson 2004:300).

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[73] And in Jerusalem lived some of the Judahites and of the Benjaminites.

[74] This is based on the analysis of the conclusion of 1 Esdras (1 Esdras 9:55) done by Van der Kooij who concluded that the conclusion of 1 Esdras is not the beginning of a lost text but a perfectly logical ending meant indeed to conclude the book (Talshir: 2003:201-202; Williamson 2004:299-300).

The argument being brought forward here is that there is no larger text from which 1 Esdras was excerpted, but the author of 1 Esdras took excerpts from Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah and added other material as it fitted his purpose (Williamson 2004:300). The purpose of 1 Esdras, according to Zipora Talshir "lies in the story of the three youths. It stages the appearance of Zerubbabel in the history of his people and credits him with the building of the Temple as well as the city" (2003:201-202). However, this theory is not unchallenged. Grabbe asks if the story of the three youths is the focus of 1 Esdras, why include the Ezra story and also why does Zerubbabel disappear during the dedication of the temple (Grabbe 2004:84).

To conclude the discussion, these are both hypotheses and therefore either of them can be right. The point that this study endorses is that brought forward by Knoppers. Even if 1 Esdras were a fragment of a longer translation, this would not in and of itself prove that Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah were originally a single work. To justify the claim that Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles are the work of the same author, the fragmentary hypothesists should make their case on other grounds. The next introductory issue that should be discussed are the sources of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles.

5 Sources

The issue of the sources of both Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles is a different topic from the question of authorship. However, in one way or another, this topic still does have a bearing on the question of common/separate authorship of these books. Although this study will now want to leave the topic of common/separate authorship behind, where necessary, the study will still comment on the common/separate authorship of the two books.

5.1 Ezra-Nehemiah

The book of Ezra-Nehemiah does clearly exhibit a suspicion of different sources even at face value just by noticing the interchange from a third person narrative to a first person narrative and the quotations of letters from different people/groups. It is a compilation of different, independent sources, sewn together by a narrative to produce the final form that we now have. The sources can be grouped into two major categories: the scriptural sources and non-scriptural sources.

5.1.1 Ezra 1-6

The first part of Ezra-Nehemiah (Ezra 1-6) contains lists and letters/decrees that are sources of the author's information for his narrative. The lists are found in Ezra 1:9-11 (Temple vessels) and Ezra 2 (Returnees from exile). The letters/decrees are found in Ezra 1:2-4 (Cyrus' decree), Ezra 4:11-16 (Rehum's accusation against the Jews), Ezra 5:7-17 (Tattenai's report), Ezra 6:2-5 (Memorandum of Cyrus' report) and Ezra 6:6-22 (Darius' reply to Tattenai). Referring to the author of Ezra 1-6 and his sources, Williamson remarks as follows: "Further, he had at his disposal a number of primary sources of such a nature as could well have been preserved in an official archive, and he also knew several other relevant works which are now found in the Old Testament" (2004:270).

5.1.2 Ezra Memoir (EM)

Another source is the Ezra memoir (EM). Portions of Ezra 7-10 are in the first person. This led to the hypothesis of an Ezra memoir for part or all of this section (Grabbe 2004:76). Many scholars also consider Nehemiah 8-9 (and sometimes ch. 10) part of the EM (Breneman 1993:37). The EM is a controversial document, because some scholars believe it is an editorial creation. However, some do believe that there is "an Ezra substratum to this section even though there may have been a good deal of editorial reworking" (Grabbe 2004:76). Arguing for Ezra as the author, Williamson (1985) avers: "[I]f , then, we conclude that a first person account underlies the narrative in Ezra 7-8, Neh 8 and Ezra 9-10 … we must clearly think of Ezra himself (or somebody working at his behest) unless strong arguments can be brought to the contrary (1985:xxxi). He further argues that "those who deny this conclusion do so most often because they have already decided that there is no such document as EM (1985:xxxi). Concluding about Ezra 1-6, Williamson writes, "in this article we have sought to establish that a single author was responsible for Ezra 1-6. Ezra 7-Nehemiah 13 already lay before him in substantially its present form" (2004:270).

5.1.3 Nehemiah Memoir (NM)

A less controversial memoir as a source of Ezra-Nehemiah is the Nehemiah memoir (NM). There is general agreement that a significant portion of the book of Nehemiah is made up of an account written by Nehemiah himself, the NM (Grabbe 2004:78). Several lists are also used in the NM as sources therein: (1) residents of Jerusalem (Neh. 11:3-24), (2) villages occupied by Judah and Benjamin (Neh. 11:25-36) and (3) priest and Levites (Neh. 12:1-26). Williamson (1985) suggests that the NM was written in two stages. He argues that "very much later, after the pledge of chapter ten had been sealed, Nehemiah may have felt that

justice was not being done to him within his own community … he was thus moved to rework his old report, adding to it a number of short paragraphs for which he felt he was not being given due credit" (1985: xxviii). Williamson further argues that there are alternative accounts of a number of his measures, in which the people act without reference to him (1985: xxviii). The lists and letters/decrees, the EM and the NM are the sources of Ezra-Nehemiah outlined above. The discussion proceeds to examine the Chronicler's sources.

5.2 Chronicles

The Chronicler used biblical writings as well as extra-biblical writings as sources: "From among the biblical works, the Chronicler's major sources are the historical compositions that preceded him: the Pentateuch, the Former Prophets and Ezra-Nehemiah" (Japhet 1993:14). Of importance is that there is general consensus that the Chronicler had Samuel-Kings as his *Vorlage* which is also part of the Former Prophets mentioned above (1982:19). There are sources that the Chronicler refers to but which are not in the Bible. There are references that appear to be official records and those which appear to be prophetic records.[75] Closer observation by Williamson, however, reveals that these sources are cited at the exact points where the *Vorlage* cites them and therefore the *Vorlage* is the source in these cases. (1982:18). The other sources which the Chronicler uses are the citations of prophetic addresses which he literally incorporate into his compositions, this includes Lamentations, "the influence of which can be traced in II Chron 36" (Japhet 1993:14). There are also sources that Williamson claims might have been lost and admits that this claim has no credibility because there is no proof thereof. This particularly should be the case with the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9 (1982:18).

Very important for this study is Ezra-Nehemiah as a source to the Chronicler. Allen states: "Chronicles appears to have been written after the bulk of Ezra-Nehemiah. It cites the latter, just as it does other written texts. Ezra 1:1-3 is quoted in 2 Chr 36:22-23, and Neh 11:3-19 in 1 Chr 9:2-17, while Ezra 9-10 is reflected in 2 Chr 24:26" (1999:300). Concerning 1 Chr 9:2-17, Allen argues that this verse is adapted from Nehemiah 11:3. 2 Chronicles 9:3 includes "Manasseh" and "Ephraim", reflecting the Chronicler's tolerant attitude versus Ezra-Nehemiah's exclusivist attitude (Allen 1999:362). With reference to 2 Chronicles 24:26, "Those who conspired against him were Zabad son of Shimeath the Ammonite and Jehozabad son of Shimrith the Moabite", Allen argues that the extra information that the

[75] For example; "written directions of King David of Israel and the written directions of his son Solomon" (2 Chr. 35:4) and "Gad, David's seer" (1 Chr. 21:9), respectively.

conspirators were sons of Ammonite and Moabite women may be due to the Chronicler's having associated their names with their presence in a list relating to interracial marriages in Ezra 10:22-23, 27, 33, and 43 (1999:581). 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 is a quotation taken from an earlier source which is Ezra-Nehemiah (Allen 1999:657). These arguments are proofs, according to Allen, that the Chronicler used this book as a source. This has implications also for the authorship debate. However, Sparks (2008) rejects the idea that the Chronicler used Nehemiah 11 when he was writing 1 Chronicles 9. They each compiled their own list from their own sources, he argues. The sources of both Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles have been examined now. The date and place of composition are the next introductory matters to be discussed.

6 Date and Place

The present discussion will start with Ezra-Nehemiah and then end with Chronicles.

6.1 Ezra-Nehemiah

Concerning the date of Ezra-Nehemiah, the study cannot claim to have attained an indisputable proof; it can only set out what it regards as the most probable case. Widely varying dates have been proposed for the final form of Ezra-Nehemiah, due in large measure to the variety of positions held regarding the extent, authorship, compositional theory and historical reconstructions. Mark Throntveit correctly realises that one of the reasons for the apparently insoluble nature of the historical problems in Ezra-Nehemiah lies in the questionable presupposition that the material has been ordered in accordance with historical or chronological criteria (1992:3). Echoing the sentiment, Williamson says: "The events recorded are selected for their contribution to the total presentation of the restoration and then welded together without particular concern for the intervening passage of time ... the events they refer to are loosened from their strictly historical moorings and regarded more in their relation to each other than to their original settings" (Williamson 1985: xlviii).

> There are two main criteria to determine a date of a composition, namely; not dating a historical book earlier than the last person or event to which it refers and ascertaining if its purpose is directed toward an identifiable situation, then using that as a basis to establish an approximate date for the work (Williamson 1985: xxxv). In our attempt to establish the date of Ezra-Nehemiah, we identify the finishing of the temple as the basis of our dating. If we take Nehemiah as the one recounting the events in the NM, then we also identify him as the last person before whom the book cannot be dated. The date for

the present form of the book must be after the events to which it refers. The temple was finished in the sixth year of King Darius,[76] i.e., six years after 522/1 BC, the year King Darius ascended the throne. That is 516/5 BC. The year 515 BC is an early cut-off date for Ezra-Nehemiah. For a later date, the book cannot be later than Nehemiah because he is the one who is telling the story. We must now therefore establish the last date for Nehemiah. It was in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when Nehemiah appeared on the scene (Neh. 2:1). The problem with this date is that it does not specify which Artaxerxes it is referring to. There were three kings by the name of Artaxerxes during the Achaemenid Empire. They are Artaxerxes I (465-423), Artaxerxes II (404-359)[77] and Artaxerxes III (353-338) (Berquist 1995:105-125). However, Artaxerxes III can easily be eliminated because he did not reach twenty years in governance. If Nehemiah's time is linked to Ezra the scribe, even more complications arise. If we choose Artaxerxes II, his twentieth year will be 384 BC. Nehemiah spent twelve years in Jerusalem and returned to the king, which is 372 BC.[78] Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem again but it is not specified when that happened and how long did he stay thereafter. If we take Artaxerxes I as the king who sent Nehemiah we will start from 465 BC, his year of ascending the throne. The twentieth year of Nehemiah's sending then becomes 445 BC. After 12 years in Jerusalem we have 433 BC as the year to return to the king. Throntveit (2000) refers to the late 5th century Aramaic papyri discovered at Elephantine. Among them there was a letter to the governor of Judah complaining that Johanan the high priest in Jerusalem has ignored the request for help in temple rebuilding. Throntveit then speculates that this must be the Johanan mentioned in Nehemiah 12:22. He also mentions that Sanballat the governor of

[76] "... and this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius" (Ezra 6:15).

[77] Artaxerxes II ascended the throne in 404/5 BC and vacated it in 359 BC. Depending on whether one starts from 405 BC or 404 BC, seven years later will be 398 BC or 397 BC. Miller and Hayes (2006) are of this opinion. They assume that Nehemiah preceded Ezra. The former served under Artaxerxes I and the latter under Artaxerxes II (2006: 529). They base their argument on four considerations: (1) Chronological precision is not characteristic of the editing of the material in Ezra-Nehemiah, where thematic interests are more evident, (2) Ezra is considered by the final biblical editor to be the real restorer of Jewish life after the exile, and this could have led to giving him priority over Nehemiah, (3) Ezra's work in Jerusalem seems to presuppose a reconstructed and repopulated city, conditions not restored until the work of Nehemiah and (4) the high priest at the time of Nehemiah was Eliashib [Neh. 3:1, 20; 13:4], whereas at the time of Ezra the high priest was Jehohanan the son (or grandson) of Eliashib [Ezra 10:06] (2006:529).

[78] This is the year in which he returned to the king, after 12 years in Jerusalem.

Samaria, Nehemiah's big enemy is mentioned in the papyri in conjunction with his sons who govern in his stead. He then argues that if Sanballat is governor in name only in 407 BC, this serves as Nehemiah's description of his old enemy in his prime in 445 BC, during the time of Artaxerxes I. This revelation brought forward by Throntveit leads this study to choose Artaxerxes I as the king that sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem. Because the text does not specify which Artaxerxes it refers to, both the Artaxerxes I and the Artaxerxes II arguments have merit. However, there are indicators within the text that push the study towards the Artaxerxes I argument. Grabbe (1998) demonstrates some textual indicators leaning towards Artaxerxes I when saying:

> Ezra 7–10 forms the story of Ezra. If we look at a historical list of the Persian kings, Ezra does not come on the scene any earlier than 458 BCE, which is the 7th year of Artaxerxes I; it could be 398 BCE if the king in question is Artaxerxes II. Yet there is no apparent awareness in the narrative that Ezra comes anything other than shortly after the completion of the temple. In fact, we have the curious move from the *6th* year (of Darius) to the *7th* year (of Artaxerxes). This looks more than just accidental, especially if all the dates in Ezra-Nehemiah are taken into account. Ezra's mission is not separate from the rebuilding of the temple but is, rather, complementary to it. The continuation from Ezra 1–6 is made clear in the opening words: 'after these things'. By this phrase, the author signals that the story still continues— there is no real break, even though a simple check of the dates would show that at least half a century had intervened, if any of this is historical (Grabbe 1998:24).

Accepting Artaxerxes I, the last year that we can establish for Nehemiah therefore is 433 BC. From here there are no clues to work from. Because there are a number of scholars who already suggest a date around 400 BC, we suggest any time from 433 BC to 400 BC. The geographical setting of this narrative is Jerusalem. Everything happens in Jerusalem.

6.2 Chronicles

The Chronicler left very few clues to help us date his work with any certainty. Because this study regarded Ezra-Nehemiah as one of the sources of the Chronicler, the suggested date of Ezra-Nehemiah is the limit beyond which the dating of Chronicles cannot move. According to this argument, Chronicles cannot be earlier than 400 BC. Scholars offer different suggestions regarding the dating of Chronicles: "Although an absolute date cannot be assigned, one past the late 3rd century is unlikely" (Knoppers 2000: 242). Grabbe (2004) says a recent case has been made to date the books to the Maccabean period; a consensus for the dating of Chronicles is tending toward the early Greek period, perhaps the late fourth century, but more probably the early third century BC. He continues and says if Chronicles is to be dated to the early Greek period, however, it may still have been composed substantially in the

Persian period. He observes that the book is not primarily concerned about the Greeks but rather focuses on issues left over from the Persian period, it thus potentially tell us something about the community at that time (2004:98). Given the limited amount of evidence directly bearing on the composition of Chronicles, Knoppers' commentary allows a range of dates, from the late fifth century through the mid-third century BC. An interesting argument comes forward from Sparks (2008). Sparks asks whether the Chronicler encouraged loyalty to Persia. If so, which is very likely, it means the Persian Empire still existed. If Persia had already fallen in the hands of the Greeks it would be unlikely that the Chronicler would still be encouraging loyalty to the Persians. Consequently, a date prior to 330 would be in view for the production of Chronicles (Sparks 2008:366-367). If we consider the limit we set for ourselves due to our stance on the relationship between Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles on the one hand, and the indication given by Sparks, our range is between 400 BC and 330 BC. To accommodate the similarities in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles which are explained as arising from the contextual influences,[79] the study will not date Chronicles too far from Ezra-Nehemiah. It will not also date Chronicles too close to Ezra-Nehemiah. The middle ground is 350 BC. "There can be no doubt, in view of the character of Chronicles as a whole that its author lived in or near Jerusalem, and that he was an ardent supporter of the temple and its services (Williamson 1982:16).

7 Purpose

To give a purpose is to answer the question why. So, the question is why the authors of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles wrote their respective books. The ensuing discussion is to respond to that question. It will begin with Ezra-Nehemiah and follow with Chronicles.

7.1 Ezra-Nehemiah

To respond to the question of what is the purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah is not like answering a question like "what is your name?" It is more complex than that. It is a multidimensional exercise and a section of a chapter cannot exhaust all its dimensions. Nevertheless, in this section the description of the purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah will be compacted so that it covers what the study deems vital. The purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah is (1) to inform the returned exiles of God's faithfulness and (2) to induce behaviour that is in line with God's covenant. Both the first as well as the second theme of the purpose are significantly contained in Ezra

[79] The language of Chronicles is clearly 'Late Biblical Hebrew', with features common to late biblical and extra-biblical works such as Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Daniel etc., on the one hand, and the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Samaritan Pentateuch on the other (Japhet 1993:25).

9-10 and Nehemiah 9-10. The prayers in Ezra 9 and Nehemiah 9 are unambiguous about informing the people about God's faithfulness and the need to obey the stipulations of the covenant. Grabbe describes Ezra's prayer in Ezra 9 as "a significant piece of theology" (1988:31). Eskenazi concurs when she describes the prayer in Nehemiah 9 as follows: "The people's prayer in Nehemiah 9:6-37 has been recognized rightly as the theological centrepiece of Ezra-Nehemiah (EN)" (2001:1). In both prayers, God's graciousness and faithfulness on the one hand and the people's disobedience on the other are emphasised. The people's disobedience is not separating themselves from the "peoples of the land" (Ezra 9:14; 10:11; Neh. 10). While both themes are emphasised, the study reasons that the second one deserves priority over the other. This is so because God's faithfulness is constant and guaranteed. However, people's obedience is variant and unreliable and therefore deserves urgent attention to secure a healthy and a safe relationship with God. For this reason, the study will now focus on the second theme of the purpose.

Janzen rearranges the verses in Ezra 9:2 and 8 so that the second theme of the purpose is clearly revealed when he says "the community has been described as הרז שדקה 'the holy seed' (9:2) that dwells ושדק מקמב in 'his (God's) holy place' (9:8)" (2008:61). In Nehemiah 9:1 Jerusalem is described as the holy city (שׁוּתֹלַם רי שׁקֹ עִ הַ֑). The community and their place of abode are holy. Holiness becomes the ultimate purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah. Taking Ezra 9:14 as a guidance as to how to respond to God's goodness that is demonstrated in Ezra 9:8, the study concludes that holiness is tantamount to separation from the peoples of the land. Grabbe expresses this sentiment when presenting the themes of Ezra-Nehemiah:

> Several significant themes arise out of the narrative or are mentioned incidentally in the text. The main one is God's providence and care for his people; even the king of the greatest empire on earth is putty in his hands, a mere instrument shaped and wielded by the deity himself to benefit his people. But being the people of Yhwh entails certain responsibilities; Yhwh must be obeyed at all times. A second theme is a part of this obedience: to keep pure by eschewing marriage to and even contact with 'foreigners' and the 'peoples of the land'. It is these 'foreigners'/'peoples of the land' who hamper the building of the temple (Ezra 4–6) and also the repair of the wall (Neh. 3–4). They are the cause of all sorts of evil (not often spelled out) and must be kept separate from the pure community—the 'holy seed' (1988:182).

Separation from "the peoples of the land" is crucial so that they may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to their children forever (Ezra 9:12). To separate from "the peoples of the land" is to remain holy. Holiness therefore is the ultimate

purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah. At this point, it might be useful for us to examine Ezra-Nehemiah's idea of holiness further.

In the introductory chapter when we discussed ideology we defined it as a set of ideas held by a particular group or person in a particular socio-historical setting to mould and shape the community into a particular direction. Ezra-Nehemiah's community finds itself in a socio-historical setting where they are slaves in the land given to their ancestors by God (Ezra 9:9; Neh. 9:36). They are in this situation because of their deeds. The leaders of the Ezra-Nehemiah community invoke the notion of holiness to direct the community to live within the parameters of their covenant with God. This idea of holiness pertains to the people and their land. They and their land were made holy and that status has to be regained and sustained. For this reason, the study argues that the holiness purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah is ideological. For an ideology to be effective, it needs to manifest itself in different spheres of the community's life. It needs to manifest itself in the community institutions, in literature, in the spoken language, in the members' behavior etcetera. Ezra-Nehemiah's holiness as an ideology is no exception. It manifested itself in different spheres of that community. There are different themes in the book that reflect the holiness ideology of Ezra-Nehemiah. The following themes do reflect the holiness ideology of Ezra-Nehemiah: Ezra 1-6 dealing with the building of the temple, Ezra 7-10 and Nehemiah 8-13 dealing with the education (rebuilding) of the community and Nehemiah 1-7 concerning the rebuilding of the Jerusalem wall. Another important theme which reflects this ideology in the form of spoken language is the concept of "all Israel". It is interspersed among the different demarcated sections above.

7.2 Chronicles

The primary purpose of the Chronicler was to rewrite the history of Israel for the generation of his time so that this history can be meaningful to them in their circumstances. As a historical writer of his time, the Chronicler is held in high esteem by some scholars. Williamson, for example, regards the Chronicler's work as the last example of Israel's genius for retelling her sacred history in a way which applies its lessons creatively to the demands of a developing community (1982:23). Something about the Chronicler's social context might be of value for our discussion. Williamson claims that there is evidence of considerable disagreement at that time concerning how "open" or "exclusive" a stance should be taken to those outside the confines of the group centred on Jerusalem (1982:24). He continues to explain that "during the central decades of this century, the Chronicler's contribution to this debate was misunderstood. He was portrayed as adopting an anti-Samaritan stance and as

justifying this from the course of the nation's past history. This misunderstanding has been dramatically reversed during the past decade, however" (1982:24). The anti-Samaritan stance Williamson refers to has since been abandoned by the majority of more recent publications. According to Klein (2006), there are two reasons that led to this change. The Samaritan schism is now dated considerably after the time of the Chronicler and a different, more inclusive attitude has been detected within Chronicles after scholars recognized that it is not part of a Chronicler's History that included Ezra and Nehemiah (2006:46). This study investigates the purpose of the Chronicler with the two facts presented by Klein as guidelines. This purpose of making the past meaningful in the present is realised in different themes in the narrative. These are the cult, the Davidic dynasty, the temple, and the concept of "all Israel". The cult and the Davidic dynasty will be discussed in different sections while the temple and the concept of "all Israel" will be discussed in one section under different subsections though. They will be discussed under one section to reveal something about them that makes them the *foci* of this research.

7.2.1 The Cult

Studying the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 9, Sparks (2008) comes to a conclusion about the purpose of Chronicles. In the structure of the genealogies as a whole, he perceives a chiastic structure. The middle part of a chiastic structure is the focus of that particular literary piece of work. In the chiastic structure of the genealogies, Sparks finds 1 Chronicles 6:48-49, the cultic personnel in their duties and 1 Chronicles 6:50-53, the cultic leaders (2008:29). He therefore concludes that the focus of the book of Chronicles is the cult and its leaders. He argues that this chiastic structuring indicates that the theme of Chronicles, if considered to be a unified text, is the cult as a whole. The Chronicler's purpose is to ensure that the proper cultic officials are offering the proper cultic offerings in the proper cultic place, and that the people are supporting the cult so as to maintain its proper functioning. According to Sparks, this centrality of the cult within Chronicles may require that all else be made subservient to that theme (2008:29).

7.2.2 The Davidic Dynasty

Knoppers argues that the Chronicler's coverage of the Monarchy proceeds according to a fundamentally historical outline. After briefly addressing and condemning the reign of Saul (1 Chr. 10), the Chronicler devotes extensive attention to the highly successful rise and reign of David (1 Chr. 11-29) and the glorious tenure of Solomon (2 Chr. 1-9). The rest of the book engages the emergence, continuation and fall of the kingdom of Judah. By placing David and

Solomon's achievements at the centre of Israelite history, the author underscores the Davidic dynasty's centrality in Israel's life (2000:243). The temple which he sees as a pervading theme is also attached to Solomon.

7.2.3 The Temple

One of the few points about which all commentators on Chronicles are agreed is that the temple was of central significance to its author (Williamson 2004:150). In highlighting the centrality of the temple, Williamson (2004) shows how the Chronicler attaches the temple to both David and Solomon who have been deemed above as a central theme of Chronicles. The future of the dynasty is made dependent upon Solomon bringing to completion the work of his father David who was barred from building the temple. In turn, David's reign is dominated by the preparations of the building of the temple. The temple is another major theme of Chronicles. It is also one of the focus points of this study. The discussion proceeds to demonstrate why this central theme is also chosen as a focus point of this research.

When discussing the temple as a focus point, the study would like to bring to the reader's attention that the whole of Israel's history is composed of different historical phases, like any nation's history. Here, these phases are understood as they are told by the Old Testament writers[80]. Of interest are the last three phases, namely, the monarchical, the exilic and the postexilic. Specifically, the interest is in the progression of the ethnic formation process, particularly its culmination in the postexilic phase. In this progression, the meaning of the temple had been greatly affected so that during the Second Temple period, it was a serious contention.

What makes the temple to be one of the focus points is its role in the identity formation process of the postexilic era. During this era, different voices/ideologies competed for supremacy simultaneously. According to Emda Orr, "ideological and verbal representations and those of action are combined within a social system (the elementary school) such that the incompatibilities between representations are ignored (2007:54). The point that is important for the study in this statement is the fact that ideological representations and those of action are combined within a social system (the elementary school is an example of social institution). In the case of this study the social institution is represented by the temple. As it

[80] These are the slavery in Egypt and the Exodus (The Pentateuch), the conquest and the settlement (Joshua-2 Samuel), the monarchical phase (1 Kings-2 Chronicles), the exiles (the Syrian exile of 722 BC and the Babylonian exile of 587/6) (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel) and the postexilic period, popularly known as the Second Temple (Ezra-Nehemiah). Besides the Bible, there are other sources like archaeology and epigraphy.

was stated in this chapter above, ideology needs to manifest itself in the community institutions, in literature, in language, in the members' behavior etcetera. The temple as a social institution is prone to be presented to reflect the dominant ideology. The study investigates therefore how the ethnic ideologies manifested themselves in the temple and the actions that transpired out of that. It is in this light that the study identified the temple as a focus point of the examination of exclusivity and inclusivity in the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. Another statement by Orr which is vital for this discussion is as follows:

> According to social representations theory (SRT), human beings construct that world by their cognitive capacity, but they do so as members of a particular society by communicating with each other within specific social contexts. Hence, these representations are shared to a certain extent by members of a given society within a specific historical time. The progression in which the representations are constructed is evolutionary, such that new representations are anchored in former ones and rooted into the societal historical representational system (2007:44).

The extent of the evolutionary progression in the social representations of the Judean community as they are expressed in the temple is the interest of this study.

7.2.4 "All Israel"

Another central theme of the Chronicler is the concept of "all Israel". Thompson (1994) repeats what has been said by Williamson (2004) in the introduction of this section, that at the time of his [the Chronicler's] writing, a major issue was the composition of the restored exiles in relation to the people of Israel. There was even some disagreement about how "open" or how "exclusive" the official stand should be. Previously, Thompson (1994) had indicated that the Chronicler viewed the whole nation, both north and south as the people of God and referred on numerous occasions to both as "all Israel" (1994:33). Klein reports that the Chronicler uses the term "remnant" for those left in the north (34:9) or those in both kingdoms (34:21) after the fall of Samaria (2006:46). Klein further describes repentance in Chronicles as including recognition of the temple in Jerusalem: "The unity of Israel, in the Chronicler's view, is based on the worship of Yahweh at His temple in Jerusalem" (2006:46). In Sparks' interpretation, the "Ephraim and Manasseh" who were part of the postexilic community are those who worshipped Yahweh in the territory called Ephraim and Manasseh. If they worshipped Yahweh in that territory they are part of "all Israel" and therefore entitled to enter into the community, and worship Yahweh in the temple (2008:367). This theme is present all over the book of Chronicles, from the genealogies right through the narrative. It is definitely one of the central themes of the Chronicler. Like the temple discussed above, the

concept of "all Israel" is a focus point of this research. It was already indicated above that ideology manifest itself in the community institutions, in literature, in language, in the members' behavior etcetera. The idea of who is Israel is expressed in the concept "all Israel". It is an old concept that evolved with time in meaning as social contexts changed. By the time of the Second Temple, in the midst of different competing voices/ideologies, this concept was highly contentious. The literature of the time reflects the adaptation of this concept to different ideological circles. Because the study examines the exclusivity or inclusivity of the ethnic ideology of Ezra-Nehemiah on the one hand and Chronicles on the other, the concept of "all Israel" is one of the proper examples to enrich the current examination Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles.

The foregoing discussion on the different central themes of the Chronicler revealed a special quality of the Chronicler as a unifier. It is recognisable in all the discussed themes. In his discussion of the cult in Chronicles, Sparks (2008) argues that 2 Chronicles 36:23, which calls for the rebuilding of the temple, "may be an invitation to those who remained in Babylon and other provinces of Persia to migrate to Jerusalem and make its temple the central focus of their cultic observance ... The Chronicler then is encouraging these people to return to Jerusalem from their exile, just as both Hezekiah and Josiah encouraged the remnant of the northern tribes to return to the temple cult" (2008:364-365). A presentation of this nature portrays the Chronicler as a unifier, a very important quality in times of adversity and uncertainty. Knoppers further demonstrates this quality of the Chronicler when he says:

> In Chronicles the national solidarity that characterises Solomon's accession and temple dedication continues throughout his reign (cf. 1 Kgs. 11). There is no hint of tension between northern tribes and southern tribes until the division. This idyllic picture of inter-tribal harmony has been upheld as a sign of the breadth of the Chronicler's vision, but this vision also has an edge. Because the Chronicler's portrayal of the United Kingdom is so uniformly positive, it effectively impugns any person or group who would violate it (2000:243).

Again, this virtue is illuminated by Williamson in his description of the function of the temple in Chronicles. Williamson argues:

> It is often thought to be a good approach in ecumenical discussions to start by going back in time to the common fount in history which unites various groups that may have diverged over lesser issues in subsequent time. In the light of that unity one may have a better perspective from which to approach those divisions. This, at any rate is what the Chronicler patently does in his presentation of the temple. His concern is always to link it back by physical ties of unbroken continuity with institutions or settings

> of far earlier times, before the divisions of the monarchical period, let alone his much later time, had surfaced (2004:153).

Finally, the concept of "all Israel", as another central theme, unifies the divided. The study therefore reasons that this vision of unity is the main purpose of the Chronicler. The different central themes nourish this broader purpose. As Williamson (2004) and Thompson (1994) indicated above that there is evidence of considerable disagreement at that time concerning how "open" or "exclusive" a stance should be taken to those outside the confines of the group centred on Jerusalem, a unifying voice is one of the most valuable things in such circumstances. However, this contention still has to be tested in chapter six.

8 Conclusion

The intention of this chapter was to explore the introductory questions to the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. However, we started by looking at the contexts of the narratives and the authors. The context of Chronicles is the monarchic era and it was outlined how the author uses this context. We then looked at the context of the Ezra-Nehemiah narrative, which is the early Persian era, and also discussed it. The emperors who ruled during this period are Cyrus (539-530 BC), Cambyses (530-522 BC), Darius I (522-486 BC), Xerxes (486-465 BC) and Artaxerxes I (465-424 BC). This period was described as progressive and prosperous. We proceeded to the late Persian period which was described as a decadent era of the Persian Empire. The emperors of this period are Darius II (424-404 BC), Artaxerxes II (404-359 BC), Artaxerxes III (359-338 BC), Artaxerxes IV(*Arses*) and Darius III (336-330 BC). There is very little information about this period. After exploring the different contexts the discussion moved on into other introductory questions. On authorship the argument was that Ezra-Nehemiah does not share the same authorship with Chronicles. The place of both authors was indicated as Jerusalem. The date of Ezra-Nehemiah was identified as around 400 BC and Chronicles around 350 BC. The purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah was stated as preserving holiness among the exiles and separation from foreign people. The Chronicler's purpose was unifying the divided people of his community. The discussion can now proceed to the next chapter that will discuss the socio-historical conditions that may have influenced the thought-patterns of the Second Temple Judean community.

Chapter Four

Prophetic Eschatology and Apocalyptic Eschatology: The Post Exilic Social Setting

1 Introduction

This chapter completes the discussion of introductory matters, coming now to the core of the research since chapter one. Chapter 1 discussed reconstruction theology which is the context that motivates the present study. The second chapter examined social psychological theories of identity, an African ethic of Ubuntu, and a social anthropological theory of ethnicity, which provide the theoretical background for this study. The previous chapter discussed introductory issues concerning the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. The current chapter will explore some socio-historical phenomena that influenced the thought-patterns of the Second Temple Judean community and therefore the authors/editors of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. The historical overview in chapter three concerns the general processes in the Persian Empire at large. In this chapter the internal processes unique to the province of Judah will be examined. Contributions from three specific scholars, namely, Paul D Hanson (1979), Robert P Carroll (1979) and Stephen L Cook (1995) will be examined. Additionally, other scholars' perspectives will also be discussed.

2 Paul Hanson

The intention of this section is not to give a full summary of everything that Hanson discusses in his book. This chapter and Hanson's study have different objectives. Hanson's study traces the origins of the second century apocalyptic. However, as Hanson traces the historical line from preexilic prophetic eschatology to postexilic apocalyptic eschatology, he touches on what this chapter is interested in, namely, the intergroup relations of the Israelite community during the postexilic period. Additionally important is the fact that the different Yahwistic restoration programmes for the Judeans as espoused by the different groups of the postexilic period were strongly influenced by the intergroup relations that transpired from that intergroup context. This is illuminated here below in Hanson's words:

> In studying the biblical documents of the sixth century, we thus face two traditions emphasising different facets of Israel's religious experience and, in a period of crisis, diverging increasingly from each other amidst bitter polemic. It is understandable that the group which gains ascendancy increasingly emphasises continuity with existing structures and the pragmatic application of traditional

> teachings to the affairs of community and cult, whereas the oppressed group appeals to a vision of divine intervention which will supplant existing structures with a radically new order, an order within which its aspirations can be actualised. More difficult to discern is the degree of accuracy in the accusation made by one group against the other. Perhaps all that can be said with confidence is that hyperbole and distortion enter into the arguments of both parties, a fact which must be remembered as we seek to interpret the meaning of the literature produced by each group and reconstruct the community setting within which that literature arose (1979:260-261).

In his book *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, Hanson (1979) traces the provenance of the second century apocalyptic. He describes apocalyptic as a religious perspective. It differs from apocalypse which is an apocalyptic literary genre and apocalypticism which is an apocalyptic movement. "Apocalyptic eschatology, therefore, is neither a genre (apocalypse) nor a socio-religious movement (apocalypticism) but a religious perspective which views divine plans in relation to historical realities in a particular way" (1979:431). Describing his historical investigation of apocalyptic, Hanson avers as follows,

> The present study focuses on one strand which can be seen running at the heart of many of the so-called apocalyptic works, the strand of apocalyptic eschatology. It seeks to demonstrate that the rise of apocalyptic eschatology is neither sudden nor anomalous, but follows the pattern of an unbroken development from pre-exilic and exilic prophecy (1979:8-9).

According to Hanson, apocalyptic grows out of an unbroken continuity with another religious perspective called prophecy of the pre-exilic and the exilic times as opposites of the same continuum (1979:10). In this study's interpretation, Hanson means that apocalyptic develops from prophecy, without them becoming inverse opposites. In his own words he says: "apocalyptic eschatology is the mode assumed by the prophetic tradition once it had been transferred to a new and radically altered setting in the postexilic community" (1979:10). To underpin this continuity, Hanson attaches the word eschatology to both prophecy and apocalyptic, rendering prophetic eschatology and apocalyptic eschatology. In his definition of prophetic eschatology, Hanson states as follows:

> Prophetic eschatology we define as a religious perspective which focuses on the prophetic announcement to the nation of the divine plans for Israel and the world which the prophet has witnessed unfolding in the divine council and which he translates into the terms of plain history, real politics and human instrumentality; that is, the prophet interprets for the king and the people how the plans of the divine council will be effected within the context of their nation's history and the history of the world (1979:11).

On the other hand, he defines apocalyptic eschatology as follows:

> Apocalyptic eschatology we define as a religious perspective which focuses on the disclosure (usually esoteric in nature) to the elect of the cosmic vision of Yahweh's sovereignty – especially as it relates to his acting to deliver his faithful – which disclosure the visionaries have largely ceased to translate into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality due to a pessimistic view of reality growing out of the bleak postexilic conditions within which those associated with the visionaries found themselves. Those conditions seemed unsuitable to them as a context for the envisioned restoration of Yahweh's people (1979:11-12).

Hanson also introduces corresponding terms to these eschatologies; *prophets* for prophetic eschatology and *visionaries* for apocalyptic eschatology. According to Hanson, the basic continuity that is a significant common factor throughout the history of both prophetic and apocalyptic eschatologies is "the vision of Yahweh's people restored as a holy community in a glorified Zion" (1979:11-12). Hanson perceives a prophetic eschatology that has been transformed into apocalyptic eschatology in the postexilic community due to disillusionment of the "prophets", who consequently turned into "visionaries", in the restoration programme of Yehud, the Persian province in Judah.

Hanson calls the drivers of this restoration programme that disillusioned the visionaries the hierocrats, the temple priests. This is how Hanson describes the hierocrats:

> When we speak of the hierocratic party, we refer to the leading priestly group of the postexilic period whose center of power was the Second Temple in Jerusalem; we also include under this designation the tradition reaching back into the exilic period upon which the ruling priestly party of the Second Temple builds. By the period of the Chronicler, it came to include more than one priestly family, gathered under the general designation "sons of Aaron" (1979:220).

Hanson depicts the temple priests as having carried with them into the exile an attitude nourished over the centuries of time in which they had served in a state sanctuary as civil servants, appointed by and answerable to the king. In this frame of mind, they were unlike many prophetic elements that bore with them into exile a traditional critical attitude toward existing civil authorities. With their attitude, the temple priests would have found it most natural to cooperate with the royal authorities in making plans for the eventual restoration of their cult (1979:226). Hanson argues that as the recognised spiritual leadership in the exile, the hierocratic party led by the Zadokite priests would have been the group having access to the royal court, and thus would have been the ones consulted by the Persians after Cyrus became heir to the Babylonian Empire (1979:226). To consolidate the new empire, the Persians offered to lend their support to the hierocratic programme of restoration in return for unrelenting fidelity on the part of the Jewish leaders.

> Thus it was the hierocratic party, led by the Zadokite priests and authorised by a Persian mandate, returned to Palestine to build Yahweh a house and to restore the land, a situation attested by Ezra 1-6, Haggai and Zechariah 1-8. The priestly leadership of that group was very exclusive, since in the exile the hierocratic party maintained its firm hold on the leadership of the community which it gained before the exile. This fact is illustrated by the list in Ezra 2, which most authorities now agree is a genuine list of those returning from exile in the period after Cyrus' decree, for the Levites are very thinly represented, amounting to a mere 74 in contrast to a total of 4289 priests! Already at that time, the hierocratic tenor of the *gôlāh* group had been set, and we can speculate that most Levites who had participated in the exile saw no future in returning with a group so dominated by the Zadokites that they would be accorded no part in the leadership of the restored cult but would be faced instead with a discriminatory policy which would relegate them to the class of "servants of the temple" (Ezra 8:17) (1979:226-227).

As Hanson draws the picture of the return of the exiles back to Palestine and the role of the so-called hierocratic party, the study is curious about intergroup relations that ensue within the Judean community in Yehud. The reason is that community solidarity and social conflict are the central themes of this research study.

Hanson argues that apocalyptic eschatology originated among the alienated and disenfranchised groups. Specifically, apocalyptic started among the Trito-Isaiah prophetic group and their allies, the alienated Levites, against the Zadokite priests in charge of the temple. Cook (1995) remarks that "Hanson is more explicit than his predecessors about alienation and deprivation as characteristic of the tradents of apocalyptic ideas (1995:8).

The other two things the study would like to mention about Hanson's discussion are the economic implications of the attachment to the temple and the biblical literature associated with the two religious formations. The former is not the focus of the present study but incidentally, it happens to be conspicuous while mentioned in passing. Referring to the rebuilding of the temple, Hanson argues that it "involved more than religious considerations, narrowly construed, as can best be understood by reference to the law regulating land tenure in Lev 25:23."[81] Hanson describes it as follows:

> Yahweh is the land owner, which, translated into the realities of economics, would read thus: those having a part in the rebuilding of Yahweh's temple, and thereby establishing their membership in his temple community, would be entitled to share in Yahweh's land, those excluded from the rebuilding and from the temple community would forfeit that claim (1979:240).

[81] The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants (Lev. 25:23).

The economic implications of the attachment to the temple are also corroborated by Blenkinsopp when he asserts that "it is clearly stated that expulsion from their assembly had serious economic consequences for those expelled (Ezra 10:8)" (Blenkinsopp 2009:35). Hanson argues that Ezekiel 11:14-21 indicates that struggles involving these claims already caused dissension between Jews in exile and those remaining in the land during Ezekiel's lifetime (1979:240-241). For those who remained behind, the fact that they escaped exile meant the judgement was upon those expatriated, especially the Zadokite priesthood and their temple cult. The deed to the land therefore had been transferred to the remainees in Palestine as the singled-out-recipients of Yahweh's blessing. Ezekiel reinterpreted the Palestinian position and converted it in favour of the exiles and their Zadokite leaders. These claims and counter-claims bore results:

> These polemical confrontations between the conflicting claims of the g*ôlāh* and the inhabitants of Jerusalem before the return of the exiles to Palestine made even more acrimonious confrontation inevitable once the return had taken place. We know from the book of Ezra, as indicated in the previous chapter, that the returnees, carrying with them a programme of restoration which was bound to an exclusive claim to being Yahweh's chosen community, refused to permit "the people of the land" to cooperate with them in the rebuilding efforts. The temple cult was their exclusive right. When we recall this cultic claim was tied up with the legal right to land tenure, we are not surprised to observe the bitter struggle which ensued between rival claimants. The books of Ezra and Haggai report that in the years immediately after the return of the Zadokite-led *gôlāh* the restoration efforts of the hierocratic group were met only with failure and frustration, because of the strenuous opposition with which they were met (1979:242).

To close the sub-section on the economic implications of being attached to the temple and the claims and counter-claims from the exilic period until Cyrus's decree of the return of exiles to Jerusalem and the reestablishment of the Jerusalem temple, it should be indicated how Hanson presupposes the situation to follow. He states that:

> Thus a very exclusive, and even intolerant, Zadokite-led hierocratic group returned to re-establish the structures which had given them exclusive control of the temple priesthood … This they sought to do on the basis of a program of restoration legitimised by the prestigious name of Ezekiel and authorised by the official decree of the Persian Emperor" (1979:227).

The mention of Ezekiel as having rendered legitimacy to the "Zadokite program" brings us to the second issue, the association of different religious groups with different biblical books. Hanson argues that the division between the two religious formations, namely, the hierocrats

and the visionaries, was also reflected in different biblical texts. This is explicit in the following statement contrasting the two streams:

> When the visionary restoration plan which we have just examined is compared to Ezekiel 40-48, it becomes apparent that we have in the Bible two rival programs of restoration, and that the visionary program, based on the message of Second Isaiah, was written in conscious opposition to that originating with Ezekiel and adopted by the hierocratic group led by the Zadokites. ... One could contrast the restoration programs in Isaiah 60-62 and Ezekiel 40-48 by referring to the former as the dream of visionaries, to the latter as the blueprint of hierocratic realists or pragmatists" (1979:71).

According to Hanson, Second Isaiah is designated as "proto-apocalyptic", Isaiah 24-27 and Zechariah 9-10 designated "early apocalyptic" and Zechariah 11-14 full-blown apocalyptic eschatology (1979:27). "The dependence of Haggai and Zechariah's prophetic movement upon the program of Ezekiel is manifested even in the architectural plan of the new temple" (1979:245). Hanson argues that the prophecy of Zechariah,[82] together with that of Haggai, was successful in mustering popular support for the hierocratic temple program and made the troubled program of the Zadokites appealing to the masses. The forms and symbols utilized on behalf of the ruling group bore a prima facie resemblance to the forms and symbols of deprived apocalyptic groups. "The strategy of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah was masterful; to the priestly tradition of the Zadokites they welded the eschatological fervour which was the hallmark of the prophetic group" (1979:245). Hanson maintains that the visions of Zechariah do not constitute genuine apocalyptic eschatology but represent instead the use of the genre of the vision to promote and legitimate a specific pragmatic program of restoration (1979:256). The application of visionary forms was short-lived in the hierocratic tradition and confined to the period during which it was deprived a temple.

Lastly, Hanson reports of a hundred year severe polarisation between 520-420 BC (1979:409).[83] This polarisation resulted in disenfranchisement and alienation of the Second Isaiah disciples, defrocked Levitical priests and other likely minorities within the community which are anonymous to Hanson from the institutional community structures. This led to the visionaries growing even more pessimistic about "the adequacy of historical structures as carriers of the salvation hope" (1979:409). Interesting for this study is one of the elements of

[82] Zechariah 1-8 is referred to just as Zechariah and Zechariah 9-14 as Deutero-Zechariah.
[83] This is a period between the beginning of Darius I's and the beginning of Darius II's reigns. This is also the period within which the missions of Ezra and Nehemiah took place.

this pessimism. The visionaries added a dimension of universalism and theological depth to Second Isaiah's proclamation.[84]

3 Robert Carroll

Hanson's study does not have unanimous support of the OT scholarship. Carroll (1979) wrote a very critical article on Hanson's study.[85] This chapter includes Carroll's article on the grounds of doing justice to the study of apocalyptic since Hanson's ground-breaking study. Carroll is not satisfied with Hanson's definition of prophecy. Hanson defines prophecy as an attempt to translate the decisions of the divine council into historical, political and human terms. Carroll misses the "moral activity whereby the prophet attempts to persuade the nation to change course and life (of the kind that Martin Buber insists is the kernel of prophecy)" (1979:19).

"A particular feature of *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* which is rather disconcerting is Hanson's obsessive use of polarisation", complains Carroll (1979:19). He argues that the existence of fierce polemic activity has no explanatory force in accounting for the rise of apocalyptic.

Carroll declares the antithesis between myth and history as a major weakness of Hanson's book.[86] Hanson does not mention the distinctive uses of myth: "Visionaries and hierocrats used entities belonging to both categories of myth so the use of myth is not a distinguishing feature of the two groups, though their specific uses of myth may have been different" (1979:19).

Carroll queries the clarity of Hanson's notion that the visionaries believed in a cult along non-Zadokite lines: "Does it mean they were in favour of a non-priestly cult, a cult in which everybody had an equal role to play and everybody was a priest? Or does it simply mean the Levites wanted a priesthood made up of Levites rather than Zadokites?" (1979:20).

Further, Carroll is uneasy with Hanson's stress on the hierocratic party's concern with continuity and the visionary party's sense of discontinuity. Carroll argues that both parties

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[84] The researcher cannot help thinking about the universalism found in the theology of Chronicles.

[85] *Twilight of Prophecy or Dawn of Apocalyptic?*(1979)

[86] Humphries describes myth as: "A story or narrative that conveys the fundamental structure of knowledge upon which the ideologies and customs of a particular culture rest ... Notwithstanding its customary fictional character, consensus proposes that the power of myth lies in its capacity to construct worldviews wherein origins, identities and behaviours are established and legitimated" (2000:934). History on the other hand is described by Schniedewind as: "'the intellectual form in which a civilization renders account to itself of its past' and as such 'comprises every form of historical record: that of the annalist, the writer of memoirs, the historical philosopher and the scholarly researcher'" (2000:594)

focused on cult as the centre. Rather one can identify distinctive accounts of how best to organise the reconstruction of cult and community. He states: "The ferocity of the polemics directed against them by the visionaries may be accounted for on the grounds that the groups were so close ideologically that minor differences were magnified out of all proportion" (1979:24).

Circularity in Hanson's discussion is another concern for Carroll. Hanson formulates a definition and uses it as weapon to advance his claims instead of argument: "For example, the visionaries have a utopian mentality because they are on the side of the oppressed and the hierocrats have an ideological mentality because they wish to preserve the status quo. And therefore oppose those oppressed elements. Zechariah is not an apocalyptic figure because he does not support the oppressed groups, but that is a judgment by definition rather than argument" (1979:25).

Eschatology is more complex than Hanson presumes. The difference between the two groups was not that eschatology versus no eschatology but of different eschatologies.

Sociological analysis is one of the most welcome features of Hanson's study. The application of a sociological theory can be illuminating as much as it can mislead if not properly interrogated. Both the groups did have ideologies and both wanted to control the cult and the sanctuary, contrary to Hanson's presumption (Carroll 1979:25). This argument will be evoked affirmatively later in this chapter.

Hanson allegorically depicts apocalyptic as a child of mother prophecy and he is not certain about the father although the possibility is that the father might have had something to do with the royal court. Carroll suggests that Hanson should perhaps look for the father in the wisdom circles of ancient Israel.

The final criticism will be quoted extensively for it also plays the role of a conclusion of this section of this chapter. Commenting on the development of apocalyptic Carroll argues:

> The complexities of analysing a category such as apocalyptic, especially in relation to its origins, are formidable. It is too diverse a category to be sustained by a monogenic theory of its origins. Various ancient streams of tradition and social movement have flowed into it and it bears traces of its prehistory which suggest a very rich and variegated past. At some stages in the life of the second temple the apocalyptic perspective gave rise to the literary phenomenon of the apocalypse but it is still far from clear when that stage may have been arrived at or what precisely may have been the contributory factors in the construction of such apocalypses (1979:30).

The enrichment that Carroll brings into the discourse is that the situation was much more complex than Hanson portrays it; with different voices competing for supremacy simultaneously. Hanson, on the other hand simplified it by emphasising mainly two streams in society after the exile.

4 Stephen Cook

After Hanson's mind-stimulating work and Carroll's eye-opening criticism, nothing less than new and different ideas on the subject can gratify the opinion-appetite that has been aroused. Stephen Cook (1995) offers exactly what this study now needs: a different opinion. In his book *Prophecy and Apocalypticism: The Post-exilic Social Setting*, he is very critical of both Hanson and Carroll. Cook (1995) charges against Hanson from two fronts. He is first critical of what he calls Hanson's conventicle approach,[87] and second, Hanson's sociological theory of deprivation. "The present scholarly situation requires not only a correction of ... Hanson's conventicle thesis in light of recent sociological thinking but also a critique of the sociological theory of deprivation", so argues Cook (1995:17-18). The second charge does not miss Carroll as well, for he is perceived as a major expositor of cognitive dissonance by Cook (1995:219).[88] Cook argues that scholars have adopted the cognitive refinement of the deprivation theory. He claims that Carroll is more explicit than Hanson in his reliance on cognitive dissonance (1995:15). Cook argues thus:

> Carroll argues that the rise of Israelite apocalypticism is an example of how "dissonance gives rise to hermeneutic." In his view, postexilic deprivation accompanied by a collapse of prophetic hopes gave rise to dissonance. As a response, apocalyptic reinterpretation of earlier prophecies attempted to eliminate the dissonance (Cook 1995:15).

In this quotation a link is made between deprivation and dissonance in Carroll's argument. "It is unfortunate that scholars have so closely linked the dissonance theory with deprivation theory", laments Cook (1995:15). It is deprivation as a condition for apocalypticism/apocalyptic[89] that makes Cook uneasy. According to Cook, some of the

[87] Conventicles are secret groups meeting for religious purposes (Cook 1995:7).
[88] "'Cognitive dissonance' involves a person having two cognitions (pieces of knowledge, beliefs, or feelings) that are inconsistent with each other, thus causing the person to experience interior conflict" (Cook 1995:14).
[89] What Hanson and Carroll call apocalyptic, Cook calls a family of apocalypticism. Hanson differentiates between apocalyptic which is a religious perspective from apocalypse which is a genre and apocalypticism which is a movement. Cook on the other hand, does not differentiate in the manner of Hanson but perceives three aspects of apocalypticism, namely, a literary phenomenon, a worldview and a social phenomenon and develops characterisations of these three aspects of apocalypticism(Cook 1995:21-22).

biblical texts that are not regarded by Hanson as apocalyptic are actually proto-apocalyptic and produced by the power-holding Zadokite priestly group (1995:212). Cook argues:

> Confirming the Israelite origins of apocalypticism, some biblical proto-apocalyptic literature was produced within the social center of exilic and postexilic Israelite society. Not all Israelite proto-apocalyptic texts stem from antiestablishment groups on the periphery of society. Although the 'conventicle' interpretation may work for some texts, it can no longer be generalised to all (1995:213).

In other words, for Cook, apocalypticism can originate from the deprived or the power-holding groups of the society. This is in contrast to Hanson's argument that apocalypticism originates only from the deprived groups of society.

5 Other Perspectives

The foregoing discussion has been focussing on whether apocalyptic/apocalypticism originated from the marginalised or power-holding groups. The concentration has been *particularly* on the Babylonian exiles and ignored other groups who nevertheless became part of the restored Yehud. The present study's opinion is that the remainees in captured Judah who became part of restored Persian Yehud deserve attention as well. An interesting perspective in this regard is Jill Middlemas' (2005) discussion on the study of the "exilic" period of the Israelites.[90] Middlemas' concern in her *The Troubles of Templeless Judah* is the concentration on Babylon as the provenance for the continuation of the traditions of pre-exilic Israel. Introducing her study, the first two sentences read as follows:

> The sixth century BCE represents a decisive period in ancient Israel as it is within these 100 years that interpreters isolate a watershed in the history, literature, and theology of the Old Testament. The turning point coincides with a period of time between 587 and 539 BCE known as the exilic age (2005:1).

During this time which Middlemas identifies as coinciding with the turning point of Ancient Israel's history, she perceives three geographical centres of the Israelites; Judah, Egypt and Babylon (2005:2; cf. also Carter 2003:314). According to Middlemas, "the period can only be spoken of as 'exilic' when the perspective is taken from that of a community which experienced a forced existence outside the land of Judah" (2005:4).[91] Middlemas prefers to refer to the period between 587 and 515 as the Templeless period. When one considers Davies' (2005) description of the concept "exile",[92] Middlemas' designation of the period

[90] Although the focus of the previous discussion is on the postexilic time, it has become apparent that one cannot discuss the postexilic period fruitfully without reference to the exilic period hence the importance of Middlemas.
[91] In other words, 'exilic' should refer to Egypt and Babylon and not Judah.
[92] "'Exile' is not an episode in the 'history of Israel'; it is an ideological claim on behalf of a certain population element in the province of Judah during the Persian period" (Davies 2005:136).

makes even more sense if one wants to exonerate him-/herself from the biases of certain texts about different groups who were in different regions and those who remained behind.[93] Actually, the point this chapter wants to register from Middlemas' study is the fact that in Judah during the Neo-Babylonian period life was going on.[94] In fact, the majority of the population remained in Judah (Middlemas 2005:6).[95] Middlemas even argues that Judah was in fact a province of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (2005:36, cf. also Albertz 1994:372; Albertz 2003:93; Grabbe 2004:134; Lipschits 2005:95). According to Albertz (1994), "the place of the royal central authority was now taken by the provincial administration, to whom taxes were to be paid and for whom services were to be paid [Lam. 5:12]" (1994:372).[96] There was even production of literary works taking place.[97] The importance of this assertion for this study will be illuminated towards the end of this chapter. Reinforcing the idea of life in Judah after 587 BC, Albertz (2003) argues that, "the Jeremiah narrative describes an opportunity for rapid improvement of the survivors' living conditions in cooperation with the Babylonians. The book of Lamentations, especially Lamentations 5, bewails the sufferings of the populace under the heel of occupation forces" (2003:91). Albertz qualifies this statement by arguing that if the texts are not to be assigned to different historical situations (before and after the murder of Gedaliah?), then we must reckon with the presence of distortions, probably on both sides (2003:91). Despite the scanty information about post-587 BC Judah, on the basis of Albertz's (2003) contribution, the present chapter argues that for the first five

[93] Middlemas (2005) argues that 'exile' does not adequately represent the fact that some people chose to flee from Judah. After 587 a group reportedly settled in the neighbouring nation-states of Ammon, Moab, and Edom (Jer.40:11) and, following the assassination of Gedaliah, another group fled to Egypt with Jeremiah in tow (Jer. 41) (2005:4).

[94] According to Middlemas "The last biblical details relevant to the population in Judah indicate an imperial policy aimed at the reconstitution of the province under a Babylonian appointed governor. Although nothing further is disclosed on this point after the death of Gedaliah, the silence of the biblical witness does not demand the view that all normal life in Judah ceased. In the first place, the biblical account locates vinedressers and ploughmen in Judah. Secondly, the Neo-Babylonian intention to encourage stability through the appointment of the governor did not necessarily change after the death of Gedaliah. The mention of governors in early second temple texts attests that from the beginning of Persian rule certain leaders of the community functioned in a capacity similar to that of Gedaliah" (2005:36-37). The study agrees with Middlemas that after 587 BC Judah was not left desolate, there were people who remained behind. This is important to determine whether the foreigners referred to during the Second Temple period did not include Judeans and the implications thereof on identity formation.

[95] Farisani (2002) also claims that 90% remained behind (2002:192).

[96] However, in footnote 10, Albertz (1994) argues that "apparently Judah was not a separate Babylonian province but administered from Samaria" (1994:599).

[97] Referring to Lamentations literature, Middlemas (2005) argues that "As a whole the focus of the poems fits well with the period in Judah following the Babylonian destruction of 587 to before the reconstruction of the temple in 515 ... In addition to historical references that suggest a placement in the sixth century BCE, an especially heavy concentration on the city of Jerusalem and Judah suggests it originated in Judah (2005:178-179).

years after the deportations of 587,[98] Judah was under the administration of Gedaliah, an appointee of the Babylonians (Albertz 2003:94-95; Grabbe 2004:134).[99] Depicting politics in the land, Albertz (2003) argues that "for the first time after the collapse of the Josianic reform with the death of Josiah in 609, the reform party had another chance to put their policies into effect. It appears that Gedaliah, who probably held the stewardship under Zedekiah, energetically seized the opportunity. He built his capital at Mizpah, that is, in the Benjaminite territory north of Jerusalem" (Albertz 2003:92; Lipschits 2005:109-112 [on Mizpah]).[100] Albertz (2003) continues by describing Gedaliah's administration, stating as follows:

> The primary goal of his policies was to provide bread and jobs for the remaining population as soon as possible. He had the complete support of the Babylonians, who assigned to the poor the abandoned property of the deported upper and middle classes.[101] In a similar vein, Gedaliah expressly approved the occupation – by force if necessary – of the deserted villages by groups of refugees returning to Judah from neighbouring lands.[102] By these actions, Gedaliah restored agricultural production and the food supply of the population with astonishing speed (2003:92).[103]

Unfortunately, within a period of five years, Gedaliah was murdered. According to Lipschits (2005), "the attempt by scholars to explain the murder of Gedaliah as an act of madness must be rejected" (2005:118). Lipschits believes it was a politically motivated murder. In fear of

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[98] Lipschits (2005) estimates Gedaliah's reign to two months. He bases his argument on the instruction that Gedaliah gave to the returnees that they must "gather in the wine, summer fruits and oil". However, they only managed to gather wine and summer fruits. The omission of oil implies that the gatherers had not yet gathered the olives and therefore Gedaliah was murdered before the olive harvest (2005:101). Coupled with that is the fact that the fall of Jerusalem took place in the fifth month while Gedaliah's murder took place in the seventh month. If that is the same year it gives two months. On the other hand, Albertz (2003) supposes that Gedaliah's murder motivated the 582 BC deportations (2003:94-95). This study endorses Albertz's proposition that "so short a period can hardly accommodate all the events recounted in Jer. 40" (2003:94). This is against Lipschits' warning that the 582 deportations should not be linked to Gedaliah's murder (2005:122).

[99] When it conquered northern Israel, Assyria divided the former into three administrative districts: Megiddo, Dor and Samaria. These apparently continued under Neo-Babylonian rule. When Judah was conquered, it seems to have been made into another province with a governor (Grabbe 2004:134).

[100] Albertz's argument finds support in Blenkinsopp (2003) when he hypothesises that Bethel became the cultic centre of post-587 Judah (2003:99).

[101] This verse and the next in the following footnote are scriptural witnesses to the claims made by Albertz in the quotation above: "Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah some of the poor people who owned nothing, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time" (Jer. 39:10).

[102] "As for me, I am staying at Mizpah to represent you before the Chaldeans who come to us; but as for you, gather wine and summer fruits and oil, and store them in your vessels, and live in the towns that you have taken over. Likewise, when all the Judeans who were in Moab and among the Ammonites and in Edom and in other lands heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan as governor over them, then all the Judeans returned from all the places to which they had been scattered and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah; and they gathered wine and summer fruits in great abundance" (Jer. 40:10-12).

[103] Despite the good intentions of Gedaliah's reforms, they sowed the seeds of bitterness in the exiles, as Albertz (2003) further indicates: "Just how extraordinary and controversial Gedaliah's distribution of property was is shown by the bitter response it evoked among the former property owners deported to Babylon [Ezek11:14-21 & 33:23-29] (Albertz 2003:92).

Babylonian reprisals, some of the Judeans fled to Egypt. They were only few as compared to those who remained behind still, contrary to the ideology of "an empty land" that prevailed thereafter.[104] In other words, still a majority of Judeans remained behind. The "empty land" ideology is in fact an ideological strategy by the exiles to delete the remainees from the history of Judah (Lipschits 2005:119;[105] Davies 2005:136; Seitz 1989:278-279). Carter (2003) paraphrases the debate on the "empty land" ideology perfectly when he says: "An empty land? Not at all. A subsistence-level economy for those who remained, probably overseen by a Neo-Babylonian appointee? A good guess. And the best we can do here is to guess" (2003:311). Drawing the picture of post-587 Judah, Lipschits says: "The population that remained in Judah lost *only* its active urban centre but was able to carry on its previous lifestyle within the new administrative framework [my emphasis – NSC]. The shift from Judean 'citizenship' to Babylonian 'citizenship' might have changed the political framework and the centre of government, but the rural patriarchal framework remained unchanged" (2005:104). However, Albertz (2003) ponders on the possibility that after 582 BC, life changed for the worse in Judah.[106] He argues that "it is possible that the complaints about the oppressive Babylonian occupation voiced in Lamentations 5 refer to the period after 582" (2003:95). According to Middlemas (2005), five themes can be deduced from Lamentations, namely, human suffering, uncertainty in future possibilities, confession of sin,[107] vocalisation of pain and orientation of grief into a future hope (2005:198-226). Suffering is definitely the basis of all the different themes identified by Middlemas.

Related to the argument that "the 'empty land' ideology is in fact an ideological strategy by the exiles to delete the remainees from the history of Judah", is the production of literature during the Second Temple period. Referring to the Jeremiah tradition, Seitz (1989) highlights two things. The first one is that a secondary development of the Jeremiah tradition took place

[104] The Chronicler is one of the proponents of this ideology (2 Chr. 36:20-21).
[105] Lipschits argues further to say: "Many inhabitants remained in the province of Judah, and the Babylonians had to appoint an alternate leadership as replacements for Gedaliah and the elite who had fled to Egypt. Neither this text nor any other biblical account contains any evidence of a change in Judah's status or in the structure of its government" (2005:121).
[106] Although conditions might have changed for the worse, life still went on in Judah, as Albertz indicates: "The abrupt reaction of the Babylonians makes it likely that the situation in Judah worsened perceptibly after 582. Probably they now appointed a Babylonian governor, but it is also possible that they administered Judah from Samaria. Jeremiah 52:30 says that this third deportation was carried out by Nebuzaradan, the destroyer of Jerusalem; this may mean that he was the Babylonian commissar in Judah and now took direct charge of the administrative machinery. According to Jer 41:16ff., fear of Babylonian reprisals led a substantial group of Gedaliah's followers to emigrate to Egypt, against the advice of Jeremiah. Moreover, it is possible that the complaints about the oppressive Babylonian occupation voiced in Lam 5 refer to the period after 582" (2003:95).
[107] This may be linked to the relationship of sin and punishment on the one hand and confession and restoration on the other.

within the context of a conflict over the interpretation of the Exile. The second one is that all levels of tradition, regardless of where and when they are diachronically located, breathe the same spirit of conflict. Describing the literature that was written during the "Templeless" period, referring particularly to the book of Jeremiah as a sample for such literature, Seitz (1989) posits as follows:

> … secondary development of Jeremiah tradition took place within the context of a conflict over the interpretation of the Exile…This development is not primarily concerned with preservative matters, and is therefore neither archival (positive) nor obscurantistic (negative). Rather, it represents a serious theological interpretation of Israel's past (Fall of Judah), present (Exile), and future (Restoration), developed on the basis of received traditions from the prophet Jeremiah (Seitz 1989:7).

The key word in this statement is conflict. It is clear that conflict became the matrix of the literature of this time and therefore the basis of the future relationship between the different communities. Emphasising the conflict element and putting it into perspective and in a historical manner, Seitz (1989) demonstrates the background:

> What stands out is that this was a time of unprecedented conflict: within the community in Judah prior to 597; within the respective communities in Babylon and Judah after 597 and 587; and especially between these two geographically separated communities after 597. Again, it must be stressed that this description of affairs sums up the general picture we get from the biblical account, without recourse to any specific literary critical approach. Put another way, all levels of tradition, regardless of where and when they are diachronically located, breathe the same spirit of conflict (Seitz 1989:4-5).

Seitz' deliberation alerts us to the fact that biblical texts are products of their contexts and that somehow gets reflected in the texts.

With this scanty information, a sketch has been drawn just to affirm the existence of life in Judah after Gedaliah's assassination albeit untold and in the process discounting the claim that Judah was an empty land which waited to be reoccupied by the exiles after its Sabbath rest. This exercise is useful to discern the "history", literature and theology supplied by the power-holding groups of the Second Temple period. This is particularly important for this study, for it has Second Temple literature as focus texts.

Within this conflict context, the temple priests in Babylon, with their attitude towards the royal authorities, managed to partner with the imperial authorities to plan for the eventual restoration of their cult. These polemical confrontations that have been going on between the conflicting claims of the g*ôlah* and the inhabitants of Jerusalem before the return of the exiles

to Palestine made even more acrimonious confrontation inevitable once the return had taken place (Hanson 1979:242).The spirit and the extent of this conflict during the period of restoration in the Persian era can be measured in the two different statements made by two different people, Carter (2003) and Grabbe (2004) respectively, when they say: "What is surprising, however, is that the ones deemed foreigners might in fact have been Jewish women who were not considered ritually pure by the members of the *gôlah* community, a position recently advocated by Eskenazi and Judd [1992]" (Carter 2003:315). Grabbe echoes the same sentiment when discussing the question of foreigners becoming part of the Israelites arguing that the case is different in women becoming Israelites, saying:

> This is complicated for two reasons: first, many of these 'foreign' women were actually probably Jewish, the descendents of those Jews left in the land at the time of the Babylonian captivity; secondly, the writings discussing these marriages usually see them as contrary to God's law and the marriages and subsequent offspring as illegitimate. Yes the fuss made in Ezra-Nehemiah over such matters suggests that it must have been a not infrequent occurrence (2004:171).

Having reached this far with our discussion, it is imperative to wrap up the discussion with Carter's (2003) exposition of Daniel Smith's acceptance of the biblical ideology of the exile. According to Carter, Smith views the exile/deportation as a defining event in Judean history. Interpreting Smith's view, Carter says: "In his view, the gôlah community sought to find meaning and stasis in a new, albeit foreign setting through four adaptative strategies that characterise other communities in crisis" (2003:314). Of the four strategies, an important one for this discussion is the third one which is the development of new rituals. Commenting on this development of new rituals, Carter has this to say: "Ritual adaptation is evident in the purity laws that establish new ethnic and religious boundaries, ones that both create and heighten the distinction between oppressed *and* oppressors and, in the case of the gôlah community, those Jews who were not exiled" (Carter 2003: 314). It is against the background of conflict that the ritual adaptation in Ezra-Nehemiah and the "empty land" ideology of the Chronicler should be understood.

6 Implications for the study

Now that different scholars' perspectives have been examined, there are points that need to be highlighted. These are points that can help us when we read the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. The first point is the fact that Hanson's study explicated the intergroup relations of the Israelite community during the postexilic period. It is by now clear that the intergroup relations in the Second Temple community were very negative. Of significance is

that these intergroup relations gave birth to two different Yahwistic restoration programmes for the Yehud population as espoused by the different groups of the postexilic community.

Additionally, the notion of alliances evoked by Hanson is of interest as well. According to the sociological theory of two basic types of religion used by Hanson, the disenfranchised groups forged alliances to strive to better their position. This is in line with Tajfel's theory of social identity. Hanson suggests that disenfranchised Levites allied themselves with the visionary followers of Second Isaiah in a coalition dedicated to a restoration of the Jerusalem cult along non-Zadokite lines. Hanson adds that many Levites had never been exiled, since they were not among the upper priestly echelons at the time of the exile, and he therefore suggests in connection with Isaiah 63:7-64:11 that the group which clashed with the exclusive hierocratic group upon the latter's return to the land included a significant number of Levites (1979:227). The notion of alliance explains the dichotomous nature of the Yehud community despite different groups of the pre-539 BC communities. This notion of alliance might also help in trying to understand who exactly were the "people of the land" referred to in Ezra-Nehemiah. Because Bethel was a cultic centre which served post-587 Judah, Blenkinsopp's (2009) analysis of Zechariah 7:1-7 introduces an opinion in this regard. In Zechariah 7:1-7 there is a prophetic disapproval of the fasting that is going on in Bethel. Blenkinsopp (2003) links this text to Haggai 2:10-14 and says: "Just as the reproach in Zechariah is addressed to the *'am hā'āreṣ* and their priests who have been engaged since the fall of Jerusalem in disingenuous acts of piety, so the religious activity, including sacrifice, of 'this people' (*hā 'ām hazzeh*) and 'this nation' (*hagoy hazzeh*) in Haggai are declared to be compromised and unacceptable" (Blenkinsopp 2003:101). He further concludes this argument in the following statement:

> The conclusion suggests itself that those addressed in both texts are to be identified with *'am hā'āreṣ* (*'ammê hā'āreṣ*, *'ammê hā'ărāṣôt*), whom the dominant Judeo-Babylonian faction considered to be religiously compromised, and who opposed the political and religious restoration of Jerusalem recorded in Ezra-Nehemiah [Ezra 3:3; 4:1-4; 9:1-2, 11; 10:2, 11; Neh. 10:31-32] (Blenkinsopp 2003:101).

To this the study adds the fact that Bethel seems to have also served the people from Samaria (Jer. 40:4-6). The alliance therefore might have included the people from Samaria. All those who were shunned by the temple priests, the study presupposes, joined the alliance against the temple priests.

Carroll (1979), in his criticism of Hanson argued that it was not a matter of eschatological versus non-eschatological but both the groups did have ideologies and both wanted to control the cult and the sanctuary, contrary to Hanson's presumption. The study agrees with Carroll that ideology was not the possession of the temple priestly group only; the alliance had its ideology of an all-inclusive temple. Despite the exchanges that have been going on between Judah and the exiles during the Neo-Babylonian Empire, after the formation of an alliance, a new programme against the Zadokites developed. While still commenting on Hanson, it is important to touch on another issue that Hanson raised, namely the economic implications of being associated with the temple. This factor even complicates and reinforces an identity crisis, for when scarce resources are linked to identity; the motive to exclude hardens the heart.

Carroll (1979) also criticised a monogenic theory approach in analysing a category such as apocalyptic, especially in relation to its origins. He argues that various ancient streams of tradition and social movement have flowed into it. This study argues along the same vein in terms of the Second Temple community division. The analysis of this division cannot be sustained by a monogenic theory approach. While the apocalyptic analysis of Hanson does explain the community division, an ethnic theory approach can also explain the division evident in this community. This is the approach that the present study employs in order to understand the reconstruction process of the Second Temple Yehud province.

7 Ethnic Theology/Ideology

So far we discussed prophetic/apocalyptic eschatology, post-587 Judah and the conflict context of the Templeless/Neo-Babylonian period.[108] Now this section will recollect the mind of the reader towards the direction of the study's destination. The study is concerned about identity formation and community solidarity amidst community reconstruction, the presupposition being that old identities tend to be modified and new identities formed. The early sixth century Templeless/Neo-Babylonian Israelite communities are no exceptions to this presupposition. The process of identity formation since the 587 BC disaster has been a long and a turbulent one. In order to create a background for the discussion of identity formation in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles, it was instructive to take this tedious route. The whole discussion above will be trimmed to serve its purpose. In a nutshell, the foregoing discussion managed to achieve three things that are significant for the three following

[108] Carter prefers Neo-Babylonian instead of exilic period making a conscious choice not to be bound by biblical writers' world views or ideologies (2003:311).

chapters. The first is the fact that by 539 BC those who would form the Yehud population were ideologically divided. The second is to give attention to post-587 Judah as well, in order to offer a fair exposure of both communities. The third is that it has been established that the matrix of the "history", literature and theology of the Second Temple that are going to be explored by this study is conflict. This is important for a critical reading of the text and thereby "a solid basis or foundation on which a theology of transformation, renewal and reconstruction can be laid" (Farisani 2002:121).

To conclude this section, a second glance at Carter's (2003) claim that ritual adaptation establishes new ethnic and religious boundaries is needed. This is done to bring the focus to the coming task of the study. The study seizes an opportunity to reveal its understanding of the relationship between the two books that are going to be investigated in the coming chapters; a relationship which was not addressed in the previous chapters. The books have different ethnic theologies/ideologies. Nevertheless, the books are related in another manner. Contrary to Hanson's belief, the study maintains that the books do not form one Chronistic history. Despite that, the study agrees with Hanson that the books come from the same temple priestly group. Hanson (1979) argues that the attempted takeover of the entire temple cult by the Zadokites represents a relatively short phase in the history of the hierocratic tradition, for the Chronicler records a return to a more tolerant spirit within that tradition (1979:269). The study agrees with Hanson so far as this does not include the characters of Ezra and Nehemiah. Speculating that Ezra might have been sent by the Persian authorities to quell the tensions in Yehud, Hanson confidently states that "Ezra indeed seems to have achieved the type of internal peace which is the background of the Chronicler's work" (1979:264). The study vehemently disagrees with Hanson in this regard. The study is more comfortable with Blenkinsopp's (2009) observation that "Ezra arrived in the province, with or without imperial authorisation, with the aim of imposing a policy of ritual ethnicity based on rigorous, selective, and by no means self-evident interpretation of certain laws" (Blenkinsopp 2009:9). Ezra is different from the Chronicler and he is even the instigator of violence with his policy of breaking marriages. The study agrees though with Hanson when he says "the Chronicler's work also betrays the elements remaining constant throughout the Persian period which would have continued to alienate and offend those remaining faithful to the visionary tradition. Certain of these elements are in need of no explanation, like the temple theology which the visionaries had opposed so strenuously in the sixth century … the pro-Persian proclivities of the Chronicler …" (1979:273).The study agrees with Hanson *only* as far as that

the mentioned elements did indeed show in the Chronicler's work; as for alienating and offending those remaining faithful to the visionary tradition, the present study will elaborate on these issues in chapter five when putting the Chronicler in perspective. A suitable comparison between the Chronicler and Ezra-Nehemiah is provided by Jonathan Dyck (1994). Dyck describes the Chronicler's identity and his work as follows:

> I would argue that the Chronicler was addressing, in the first instance, the ruling and priestly classes in Jerusalem of which he was part and that Chronicles is thereby representative of the self-understanding of these ruling classes. His ideology is part of, sustained, and perhaps even transformed, an ideological discourse at the heart of the theocratic establishment. The Chronicler is asking his audience to imagine Jerusalem as the centre of a nation, territorially defined, and not simply the cultic centre of a small citizen-temple community within an empire. Whereas the author of Ezra-Nehemiah exhibits a defensive posture, the Chronicler articulates a more confident understanding of Jerusalem's role as the centre of Israel – people and land. In comparison to Ezra-Nehemiah, the Chronicler recognizes an opportunity for his community to expand his horizons, to claim its rightful place over Israel, thereby restoring the theocratic kingdom to its full extent (Dyck 1994:162).

Responding to the differences between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, Knoppers argues that "some of the differences between the theology of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah have been too sharply drawn or some of these differences can be attributed to different subject matter [the pre-exilic monarchy versus the postexilic Yehud]" (2000:241). This comment can be construed as affirming similarities as well between the two books, which the study does not deny. As it has been indicated in the previous chapter, the study maintains that Chronicles was written later than Ezra-Nehemiah and therefore that can be a factor in their ideological differences. Nevertheless, the books have different ideologies. The following two chapters will investigate how Ezra-Nehemiah shifts the ethnic borders on the one hand and how Chronicles moves these borders on the other.

8 Conclusion

This chapter explored some socio-historical phenomena that might have influenced the thought-patterns of the Second Temple Judean community and therefore the authors/editors of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. In doing this different scholars were discussed: Hanson (1979), Carroll (1979), Cook (1995) and other perspectives.

Hanson depicted a dichotonomous kind of intergroup relations in the Israelite community during the postexilic period. According to Hanson, the Second Temple community was divided between the hierocrats and the visionaries. Carroll on the other hand perceived this

description of the socio-historical context of the Second Temple community as oversimplification. He argues for a complex social environment consisting of different voices competing for supremacy simultaneously. The study agrees with Carroll while taking note of Hanson's notion of alliances at the same time. Another scholar, Cook, criticises both Hanson and Carroll for arguing that deprivation gave rise to apocalyptic. For Cook this implies that apocalyptic can only originate from the deprived. Cook is convinced that apocalyptic can originate from the deprived or the power-holding groups of the society. However, Hanson forms the basic source for the examination of the socio-historical context of the Second Temple community in this study; the other scholars' works have been presented to do justice to the discourse of apocalyptic.

The discussion took a turn with the introduction of Middlemas' contribution. She challenges the concentration on the Babylonian exiles and ignoring of other groups who nevertheless became part of the restored Yehud. She identifies three geographical centres of the Israelites during, what she calls, the Templeless period, namely, Judah, Egypt and Babylon. Of great importance from this argument however, is the dismissal of the "empty land" ideology. Different scholars elaborated in different ways in dismissing this ideology. The land of Judah has never been totally depopulated in its history, so goes the argument. The study also agrees with this argument. This is the notion which will be guiding the reading of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles.

The study highlighted some important points from the apocalyptic discussion. The first is that intergroup relations in the Second Temple community were characterised by conflict. The second one is that the notion of alliances evoked by Hanson may explain the dichotomous nature of the Yehud community despite different groups of the pre-539 BC communities. Thirdly, the study agrees with Carroll that ideology was not the possession of the temple priestly group only. The study then adds that the alliance had its ideology of an all-inclusive temple. Lastly, the study agrees with Carroll that the analysis of this community division cannot be sustained by a monogenic theory approach. The study further argues that while the apocalyptic analysis of Hanson does explain the community division, an ethnic theory approach can also explain the division evident in this community.

Lastly, the study shows how the work of the previously discussed authors feeds into its own argument. It identifies three achievements for the discussions in the remaining chapters. The first one is the fact that by 539 BC those who would form the Yehud population were

ideologically divided. The second one is to give attention to post-587 Judah as well, in order to offer a fair exposure of both communities. The third one is that it has been established that the matrix of the "history", literature and theology of the Second Temple that are going to be explored by this study is conflict. This is important for a critical reading of the text and thereby a solid basis or foundation on which a theology of transformation, renewal and reconstruction can be laid.

Chapter Five

Identity Formation in Ezra-Nehemiah

1 Contents of Ezra-Nehemiah

The contents of the Ezra-Nehemiah corpus are based on different previously independent traditions (Howard 1983:277; Williamson 1985: xxxiv-xxxv; Grabbe 1988:91). This is hinted to by the corpus itself. For example, the narrative is told in the third person and the first person as well. The first person parts are associated with two protagonists of the narrative (the EM after Ezra and the NM after Nehemiah) while the third person parts are either by them or the final redactor (Howard 1983:277). There are two languages used in the text (Hebrew and Aramaic). Chapters four to six of the Ezra section are written in Aramaic although they are introduced and concluded in Hebrew. Commenting on the discussions about this issue, Williamson says: "More generally, however, commentators have maintained that the Aramaic material was a separate source in correct chronological order (i.e. with Ezra 4:6-23 following Ezra 5:1-6:18)" (1983:16). There are also lists and letters written by different people who are not the final redactor, continues Williamson. This idea of a history beyond the final form is also reinforced by other corpuses that deal with the same traditions found in the Ezra-Nehemiah text. For example, 1 Esdras' narrative has Zerubbabel and Ezra with the exclusion of Nehemiah; Josephus tells the story differently from the Hebrew Ezra-Nehemiah but similar to 1 Esdras although he omits 1 Esdras 1 (similar to 2 Chr. 35-36) and includes Nehemiah; Ben Sira mentions Zerubbabel, Joshua and Nehemiah and leaves Ezra out while 2 Maccabees mentions Nehemiah only for all the roles played by Zerubbabel and Ezra in other texts (Grabbe 1988:89-90). According to Williamson (1985) there are three basic stages to the composition of Ezra and Nehemiah. The three stages are as follows: (1) The writing of the various primary sources, more or less contemporary with the events they relate; (2) the combination of the EM and the NM, and other sources to form Ezra 7:1 to Nehemiah 11:20; 12:27 – 13:31 (11:21-12:26 were added separately); and (3) the later addition of the introduction in Ezra 1-6 (1985:xxxv).

Thus, Ezra-Nehemiah is comprised of different traditions. What has been discussed above is put into perspective by Grabbe (1988) when he says:

> First, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are based on independent traditions—that is, the main traditions of the two books originally grew up separately; second, they have been brought together by a compiler

> of some skill and are now meant to be read as a single unit. Both these factors—which in some way are two sides of the same coin—have to be taken into account in any use of the two books, especially for historical purposes. The Hebrew tradition that the two form a single book recognizes the present nature of the two books in their final textual and canonical form (Grabbe 1988:91).

Grabbe concludes: "The picture we are left with is that there were once three complexes of tradition: the Joshua-Zerubbabel tradition, the Ezra tradition, and the Nehemiah tradition" (1988:115).

Grabbe (1988) moves on and further describes the use of Ezra-Nehemiah by different readers. For presenting the contents of Ezra-Nehemiah it is important to bring to the reader's attention what Grabbe says about the reading of Ezra-Nehemiah. He says:

> So far the unity of the (sic) Ezra-Nehemiah has been emphasised in looking at its structure; however, it is important to emphasise that the present unity of Ezra and Nehemiah is an editorial unity. It has been created by a compiler taking separate traditions and putting them together with some care and intelligence to effect a whole. It is perfectly legitimate to read the two books together as a unity. On the other hand, it is also perfectly legitimate to go behind the editor and to look at and interpret the traditions separately (Grabbe 1998:102-103; 2004:73).

The study therefore argues that it is the aspect or dimension of the narrative that the reader wants to highlight that dictates whether the reader goes beyond the edited final form and deals with the sources independently or deals with the final form. Wills (2009) wants to highlight the "shifting views of the We and the Other" in the text and deals with the sources (2009:59). Eskenazi (1988) on the other hand, deals with the final form because she wants to illuminate "the book's overall intention" (1988:13). As it has already been argued, both approaches, given their own aspects of focus, are legitimate. The division of the narrative by the two readers differs according to the analytical approaches they have employed. In Wills Nehemiah 8 is part of the EM while in Eskenazi, the chapter is part of the NM. Thus Wills divides Ezra-Nehemiah as follows:

1. Ezra 1-6: First rebuilding under Jeshua and Zerubbabel;
2. Ezra 7-10 & Nehemiah 8-10: Ezra Memoir;
3. Nehemiah 1-7 & 11-13: Nehemiah Memoir.

Eskenazi adopts the structural schematisation of story by Claude Bremond – potentiality (objective defined), process of actualisation (steps taken) and success (objective reached). Her division thus goes like this:

1. Potentiality: Ezra 1:1-4 [decree to the community to build the house of God];
2. Process of actualisation: Ezra 1:5-Nehemiah 7:72 [the community builds the house of God];
3. Success: Nehemiah 8:1-13:31 [the community celebrates the completion of the house of God according to Torah] (1988:38).

Because the present study wants to illuminate the overall intention of the book, it will focus on the final form of the text. The study demarcates Ezra-Nehemiah into four sections. The demarcations are as follows:

1. Ezra 1-6: Building of the temple – First phase of the reconstruction process;
2. Ezra 7-10: Building of the people [Part I] – Second phase of the reconstruction process;
3. Nehemiah 1-7: Building of the wall – Third phase of the reconstruction process;
4. Nehemiah 8-13: Building of the people [Part II] – Second phase of the reconstruction process revisited.

Eskenazi (1988) describes the "potentiality' of the narrative as introducing "the central character, i.e., the people as a whole, and the central event, i.e., building the house of God (Eskenazi 1988:39). The present study would like to adapt Eskenazi's phrase to accommodate the study's view of the structure of the narrative. The narrative therefore, is about the central character, i.e., the people as a whole, and the central events, i.e., building the city temple and the city wall.

1.1 Building of the Temple (Ezra 1-6)

The narrative starts with a decree from Cyrus of Persia, after he defeated Nabonidus of the Babylonian Empire in 539 BC.[109] Cyrus declared that the Lord gave him all kingdoms of the earth and charged him with the building of the temple in Jerusalem. This declaration was accompanied by two instructions:

1. That all of those who are God's people may return to Jerusalem in Judah to rebuild this temple of the Lord;
2. and that those who live in any place where Jewish survivors are found should contribute toward their expenses by supplying them with silver and gold, supplies for

[109] The Babylonian Empire had kept some of the people of Judah in captivity since the major invasion of Jerusalem in 586/7 BC. There was however an earlier invasion of 596/7 BC and later one of 582 BC (Middlemas 2005:4).

> the journey, and livestock, as well as a freewill offering for the temple of God in Jerusalem (Ezra 1:2-4).[110]

The heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, with those whose spirit God had stirred to go up to rebuild the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, accepted the offer (Ezra 1:5). The neighbours of those who were going to Jerusalem assisted them with different gifts. King Cyrus returned the valuables that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had taken from the Jerusalem temple during the invasions to put in the temple of his gods. The valuables were handed over to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. Sheshbazzar took all the stuff to Jerusalem.

The author then gives the list of those who went to Jerusalem. There were six hundred and fifty-two people who could not be found in the list: sons of Delaiah, Tobiah and Nekoda. There were also sons of the priests who were not found and the governor prohibited them from practicing their priesthood. In the seventh month since they arrived, under the leadership of Jeshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the governor, they built the altar on which to offer burnt offerings to the Lord in accordance with the Law of Moses. "Thereafter they offered the established holocaust, the sacrifices prescribed for the new moons and all the festivals sacred to the Lord, and those which anyone might offer as a free-will gift to the Lord." (Ezra 3:5). In the second year of their arrival, they laid the foundation of the temple. After the foundation had been laid, there were sounds of joy that were heard afar. When other Yahwists in the neighborhood of Jerusalem heard about the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem they came to offer help. The author presents this incident as follows:

> [1]Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the Lord, the God of Israel, [2] they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers' houses and said to them, "Let us build with you; for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here" (Ezra 4:1-2).

The offer was rejected by Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers' houses. They told them they have no part in rebuilding the temple. The mention of Esarhaddon raises curiosity as to who these people were. According to Chavalas (2000) the deportations mentioned in Ezra 4:2 are not mentioned in the Assyrian annals. However, Chavalas argues that it seems probable that this deportation may have come about because of Sennacherib's (Esarhaddon's father and predecessor) major campaign in the west (ca. 701 BC) and continued during the reign of Esarhaddon (2000:419). In 2 Kings 17:24 it is reported about a king of Assyria who brought

[110] These instructions are adapted from the New Living Translation.

people from different places and placed them in the cities of Samaria. Whatever the case may be, the study agrees with Blenkinsopp when he says that the statement in Ezra 4:2 of the "adversaries" as it stands does not reflect the author's animus against the Samaritans. It would be anachronistic to call these people Samaritans since the Samaritans did not exist as a separate religious community in the early Persian period (1988:107). One thing is certain about these people however. That is, they worshiped the same God who was worshiped by the group of Zerubbabel. When their offer was rejected they discouraged the exiles and made them afraid to build.

What followed thereafter was insistent opposition to the reconstruction process of the exiles from the time of Cyrus until the reign of Darius king of Persia. From Ezra 4:6 to Ezra 4:24 the literary style of the author is confusing to the reader. The section reads as if the author mixes the chronology of the Persian kings. He refers to Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes and then returns to Darius. The impression given by this section presents Xerxes (Ahasuerus) and Artaxerxes as having ruled before Darius. However, the study is more convinced by Williamson's (2004) option that perceives the situation here as more a matter of literary style than ignorance of chronology. Williamson argues that Ezra 4:24 can be understood as a literary device known as "repetitive resumption". Explaining "repetitive resumption" Williamson says:

> This is a device whereby – in the days before brackets and footnotes – an author could mark the resumption of a narrative flow which had been broken by the insertion of some digressionary material. It is done by repeating the substance of the sentence before the insertion with generally similar wording (2004:258).

To clarify the issue; the story is about the building of the temple. Parallel to the theme of rebuilding the temple is the theme of opposition which is also important for the narrative. It is important to demonstrate the extent of the hostility of the "people of the land" on the one hand and the victory that God won for the exiles on the other hand. According to Williamson (2004), the opposition theme could serve as a justification for the seemingly harsh rejection of the offer of help in 4:1-3 and for the designation of those who offered help as "adversaries of Judah and Benjamin" (2004:258). Miller and Hayes (2006) also share the same opinion. Indicating that Ezra 4:6-23 have been presented out of chronological order, they assert that these verses have been employed to illustrate the theme of "opposition to restoration", the topic of Ezra 4 (2006:528). So, the author interrupted the story of the rebuilding of the temple

by inserting these further oppositions even after the completion of the temple. In Ezra 4:24, the author resumes the temple story, after the interruption which was necessary.

Ezra 4:6 refers to the beginning of the reign of Xerxes (486-465 BC) when the adversaries made accusations against the people of Judah and Jerusalem. There are no further details given. Commenting on this verse, Williamson says:

> There had been an earlier revolt at the beginning of the reign of Xerxes I in 486-485 BCE, but although it brought Xerxes to Palestine in person, we have no direct evidence of Judah's involvement, despite some speculative suggestions to the contrary. Ezra 4:6 may relate to these events, but no details are given (2004:16).

Although Williamson does not mention Egypt by name, a number of scholars corroborate this Egyptian revolt hypothesis (Blenkinsopp 1988:111; Yamauchi 1988:628; Bilkes 2000:31; Miller & Hayes 2006:528). Blenkinsopp (1988) speculates that the activities in Yehud may have "provided the occasion or pretext for accusations of complicity with or sympathy for the rebels" (1988:111). Admitting the lack of information about this incident, Yamauchi (1988) says "nothing is known about this incident beyond the brief biblical reference, but its timing to coincide with the Egyptian rebellion cannot be accidental" (1988:628). Bilkes (2000) recalls that according to the book of Esther, Xerxes first approved anti-Semitic measures [Esth. 3:12-14]; subsequently, through the crucial mediation of his Jewish wife Esther, he permitted forceful resistance by the Jews against any organized assault (8:10-14) (2000:31). The bottom line is there are no further details provided.The next section, which covers verses 7-23, tells about a letter written to Artaxerxes reporting the rebuilding of the city wall. According to Williamson (2004), this incident is out of place chronologically in its present setting, but must be dated prior to Nehemiah, who saw the wall-building through to a successful conclusion with imperial support (2004:17). The king responded instructing that the wall reconstruction must be halted with immediate effect. These incidences belong to the next section titled by this study Building of the Wall, however, the editor put them here because for some reason, he felt they could serve their purpose here well. Nevertheless, the theme of opposition has been juxtaposed with the theme of the temple building. In the following chapters, king Darius allowed the resumption of the reconstruction of the temple. In his sixth year, 515/6 BC, the temple was completed. The dedication of the temple was celebrated and the Passover was held: "It was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by everyone who had joined them and separated himself from the pollutions of the peoples of the land to worship the Lord, the God of Israel" (Ezra 6:21). They

also kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy. It took them twenty-two years to finish the temple,[111] due to the opposition of the "people of the land. The first central event of Ezra-Nehemiah was then completed.

1.2 Building of the people [Part I] (Ezra 7-10)

The second phase of the reconstruction process, the building of the people, ensues. In the seventh year of king Artaxerxes (465-424 BC), Ezra, the son of Seraiah, a descendent of Aaron the chief priest, went up to Jerusalem with some of the people of Israel, and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers, and the temple servants (Ezra 7:7). It was in 458 BC that Ezra went up to Jerusalem. It was fifty-seven years since the temple was completed.

Chapter 7 starts by introducing Ezra the priest descended directly from Aaron and "a scribe skilled in the Law of Moses which the Lord the God of Israel had given." Also introduced are the people with whom Ezra went up to Jerusalem, namely, some of the people of Israel, and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers, and the temple servants (Ezra 7:1-10). Miller and Hayes (2006) perceive the depiction of the return under Ezra "as a second exodus under this postexilic 'Moses'" (2006:529). Just like in the previous section, there is a decree from the king, king Artaxerxes, which allows another going up to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:11-26). Also, like those of Cyrus and Darius, it is in Aramaic (Blenkinsopp 1988:146).

Because 7:27-28 are in the first person by Ezra, the study joins them to Ezra 8:1-9:15. In these two verses Ezra is grateful to God whose hand is upon him (Ezra 7:27-28). From Ezra 8:1-14 we find a list of those who returned with Ezra. He gathered them to the river and recruited Levites to go with (Ezra 8:15-20). They fasted in preparation for the journey and did all other necessary preparations for the journey (Ezra 8:21-30). Priests and Levites were entrusted with temple articles. They started their journey and arrived safely (Ezra 8:31-36). Since the decree of Darius, the reconstruction process has been taking an upward direction. The temple was completed and the Passover celebrated. King Artaxerxes, who had been hostile to the reconstruction process, has been won to the side of the exiles. Another phase in the reconstruction process has been sanctioned by Artaxerxes himself. The enemies of the exiles had been defeated. On their arrival, they encountered a downturn in the process of reconstruction. The spirituality of the exiles leaves much to be desired. Ezra 9:1-2 reports the situation as follows:

[111] 537 BC – 515 BC = 22 years

> [1]After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. [2] For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons; so that the holy race has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands. And in this faithlessness the hand of the officials and chief men has been foremost" (Ezra 9:1-2).

Describing this crisis, Eskenazi (1988) says, "It is of no small significance that Ezra's crisis pertains to the very nature of the community ... Becoming a holy people is at stake" (1988:68). So far, the external enemy has been defeated but now, the enemy crops up from within. The temple provided the infrastructure for Israel to once again meet with their God. However, that was not enough, because the infrastructures were just constructions or installations that formed the basis of a system. In this particular case the temple, as an infrastructural structure, was a basis of the religious, social and economic systems of the Yehud community which was under reconstruction. The intermingling of the "holy seed" with the "people of the land" was thus an anathema in terms of the temple system, which was the basis of the life of the exiles in general. Israel was to be a holy nation, uniquely set apart from the nations and their abominations. However the danger of spiritual contamination through mixing with the "people of the land" was a real and continuing threat. In order to prevent such an anathema and to establish a community that could be justified in the face of the Lord, Ezra humbled himself before God and confessed the nation's sin (9:1–15). Ezra tore his clothes, pulled his hair and beard, and sat down utterly shocked. Then all "who trembled at the words of the God of Israel" came and sat with him because of this unfaithfulness of the people. In Eskenazi's words, Ezra's "confession to God is a public event, attracting the attention of the devout (Ezra 9:4). Ezra's moving display stirs the people to repent and to act" (1988:68). At the request of Shecaniah son of Jehiel (Ezra 10:2), an assembly was proclaimed. Absence from the assembly was threatened with expulsion and confiscation of property. The assembly agreed in one voice that they are going to separate themselves from the "people of the land". Grabbe comments on the separation of husbands from their wives and children as follows:

> Ezra 10 ends quite awkwardly. Those who have sinned by marrying 'foreign' women are listed. Although this is positive evidence of their 'repentance', the final verse mentions the 'foreign' wives and (apparently) their children. The ancient reader may not have reacted like the modern one by seeing this tearing apart of families as tragic; nevertheless, the book ends awkwardly and on a down note (1998:93).

Ezra had thus dealt with the practice of intermarriage between Israelites and the "people of the land" "decisively". The people responded to the call to separate themselves from the "people of the land" and thereby completing the second phase of the reconstruction process, namely that of the "holy community". To summarise this subsection, the following passage of Wilis (2008) applies: "The Ezra memoir ... reflects a more complicated division, in which the Other on the horizon has been discovered among us, in the form of foreign women and their children. The external Other is also the internal Other" (2008:68).

1.3 Building of the Wall (Neh. 1-7)

Nehemiah 1-7 concerns the second central event of Ezra-Nehemiah and the third phase of the reconstruction process, namely the building of the wall. The temple has been erected and established; the "holy community" has been set-up on a firm basis; so now is time to preserve and secure the hard-earned achievements. Like the two previous sections, Nehemiah 1-7 has two parallel themes: reconstruction and opposition. These twin themes also illuminate God's favour towards the exiles. But, unlike the two previous sections, Nehemiah 1-7 does not reflect one form of opposition, either external or internal. In this division, both the external and the internal "enemies" are found. The external enemies are in the form of Sanballat, Tobiah and others. The internal enemies are in the form of those exilic Judeans who interacted positively with Tobiah (Neh. 6:17-18).

Nehemiah's mission is not as contested as Ezra's. One can generally say that there is quite a consensus about 445 BC, which is the thirteenth year since Ezra's mission started. The first two chapters of the Nehemiah section deal with preparations for the big task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. The pattern of Nehemiah's return is similar to Zerubbabel's and Ezra's in that he secured the permission and support of the Persian king (Artaxerxes). It differs however in one dramatic respect; it leaves in one's mind an impression of a heavily armed high-ranking soldier on horseback with his regiment heading for an invasion. On his arrival, he behaved like a spy before an imminent final onslaught (Neh. 2:11-16). Chapter three deals with the organisation of labour and the beginning of the reconstruction process (3:1-32). When the work started, Nehemiah's enemies, Sanballat, Tobiah and others were displeased (Neh. 2:10), derided and despised them (Neh. 2:19), ridiculed them (Neh. 3:35 [Eng 4:3]) and they were ultimately very angry (Neh. 4:1[Eng 4:7]). The construction process is interrupted in chapter 5 by an internal problem. There were complaints about poverty. The poor classes protested against the exploitation by their fellow Judean brothers. Some complained that they had to mortgage their property and even sell family members into slavery (Neh. 5:1-5).

Nehemiah rebuked the exploiters in public, commanded restoration of property and secured the promise of compliance (Neh. 5:6-13). He also told them how he tried to lift the economic burden from the Judean people since he was a governor (Neh. 5:14-19). When the wall was about to be finished, Nehemiah's enemies invited him four times to discussions. According to Nehemiah, they wanted to do him harm. While Nehemiah had to contend with the external enemies, "internal enemies"[112] did not make Nehemiah's worries lesser. For example, Shemaiah was bribed by enemies to help discredit Nehemiah by falsely prophesying (Neh. 6:12-14). The nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, who is Nehemiah's enemy, and Tobiah's letters came to them. Many in Judah were bound by oath to Tobiah. Also they spoke of Tobiah's good deeds in Nehemiah's presence, and reported Nehemiah's words to Tobiah. Despite all the opposition, the wall was finished. The rest of Nehemiah 7 is about the list of exiles who returned to occupy Judah and Jerusalem.

1.4 Building of the People [Part II] (Neh. 8-13)

It was now thirteen years since Ezra brought the law to Jerusalem. In Ezra 10 the mixed marriages issue was solved according to law but nowhere was it openly read (Ezra 10:3). The wall has been completed and people gather together to hear the law being read to them by Ezra with Nehemiah as part of the proceedings. Finally, the two have come together. Scholars pick up a number of things that give the impression that this chapter belongs to the Ezra memoir. The enclosure of the city by the wall was supposed to be the final stage of the reconstruction process; however, it seems the building of the people has to be revisited. Ezra's reading of the law and the observance of the Festival of Sukkoth renewed the community (Neh. 8:1-18).

Nehemiah 9:1-3 brings into mind what happened in Ezra 8-10. Nehemiah 9:2 reports that those of "Israelite descent" separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors. It is interesting to note that the exiles are called those of Israelite descent. While building of the physical infrastructure succeeds despite the opposition, it seems with the spiritual reconstruction there is no full success so far. Like in Ezra 9, Ezra made his long prayer. Conspicuous in the prayer is Ezra's assertion that they are still 'servants' (Neh. 9:36) in their land and in great distress because they are still dominated by a foreign power which reaches down to their cattle and even their own bodies (9:37). After the prayer, they made a firm agreement in writing, and on the sealed document they inscribed

[112] They are internal enemies because they are part of the exiles working together with Nehemiah and at the same time they are friendly to Tobiah whom Nehemiah regards as enemy.

the names of their officials, their Levites, and their priests (Neh. 10:1 [Eng 9:38]). Chapter 10 is made up of two sections, namely, a list of signatories of the "firm agreement" (10:2–28 [Eng 10:1-27]) and a pledge to observe certain laws and regulations (10:29–40 [Eng 10:28-39]). They denounced mixed marriages, promised to honor the Sabbath and provide all the offerings and contributions expected from them (Neh. 10:30-40 [Eng 10:30-39]). As Grabbe (1998) notices, "the pledge itself does not focus particularly on mixing with foreigners (though that is included) but with a variety of issues relating mainly to the temple" (1998:54). With the pledge, the building of the community gave hope for success. Chapter 11 comprises mainly of the list of people who were settled in Jerusalem. "These are the leaders of the province who lived in Jerusalem; but in the towns of Judah all lived on their property in their towns: Israel, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon's servants" (Neh. 11:3). Again, it is interesting to note that the general membership is referred to as Israel while in reality they were only the exiles. In verse 4 however, the author is specific about Judah and Benjamin. Chapter 12 provides another list of people who came with Zerubbabel and Jeshua. The study cannot help taking note of Grabbe's (1998) remark on the chapter. He remarks that the fondness for lists in the book reaches a ridiculous point with this chapter. Verses 1-26 outline a list of the priests and Levites who came up with Zerubbabel and Joshua. The dedication of the wall which was completed in Nehemiah 6:15 has been delayed until Nehemiah 12:27. From Nehemiah 12:27 until Nehemiah 12:43 the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem is described. The final section, Nehemiah 12:44-47, concerns an arrangement to store and distribute gifts for the temple personnel. The temple system is established according to the monarchic times. The temple is complete, the people have been renewed, the wall is complete and has been dedicated, and the perfect temple system has been put in place. Both the external and the internal enemies have been defeated. The reconstruction process is complete and successful. If the narrative ended here, it would have been a success in all respects, from the perspective of Ezra-Nehemiah. However, in Nehemiah 13:1-3 there is another indication of the exiles mixing with the "foreigners". The book of Moses was read to the people. It told them about the unacceptability of the Ammonites and the Moabites in the assembly of God. For yet another time, they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent. In the following verses, another blow was suffered by the ideology of Ezra and Nehemiah. The "enemy" from within seemed to be more persistent than the enemy from outside. While Nehemiah was gone to the king, Tobiah was allocated a room at the temple. When Nehemiah returned he evicted him and purified the room (Neh. 13:4-9). The people did not provide offerings for the temple staff (Neh. 13:10-14), the

Sabbath was not honoured (Neh. 13:15-22), again, the mixed marriage problem cropped up (Neh. 13:23-29). The pledge that was signed and sealed in Nehemiah 10:1 was not honoured. Nehemiah had to restore everything back to what it should be. Merchants from outside Jerusalem slept outside the wall when Nehemiah ordered the closure of the wall until the Sabbath was over, and Nehemiah promised to lay hands on them if they do not stop. Concerning the mixed marriages, Nehemiah tells as follows:

> In those days also I saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab; [24] and half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and they could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke the language of various peoples. [25] And I contended with them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. [26] Did not King Solomon of Israel sin on account of such women? Among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless, foreign women made even him to sin. [27] Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil and act treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women?" (Neh. 13:23-27).

Finally, Nehemiah cleansed them from everything foreign, and he established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work. He provided for the wood offering, at appointed times, and for the first fruits (Neh. 13:30-31).

The contents of Ezra-Nehemiah discussed above can be summarised by presenting Wills' (2008) observations of the Ezra-Nehemiah narrative. According to Wills, what will define this group is a correct cult at *the temple*, *a sanctified city*, and *a pure endogamy* (2008:61). All three; the temple, a sanctified city and a pure endogamy were the basis of a discriminatory attitude towards any who was not originally from Judea and has not been exiled to Babylon. To accomplish this, avers Wills, the author of Ezra-Nehemiah has divided the landscape into two distinct groups:[113] Judeans returning from the exile (*gôlah*), and the foreign nations or people of the land who were newcomers to the worship of God. Conveniently ignored are two other groups: Judeans who were not exiled but remained in the land, and those people who were descended from the Israelites in the north, continues Wills. These two groups may have been part of the "people of the land" who thwarted the building plan (Ezra 4:4-5), but the text before us pushes aside these middle categories and presents the world as two extreme alternatives: Judean returnees on the one hand and adversaries who were only pretenders to be Israelites (Wills 2009:61). What Wills (2009) refers to is what has

[113] Wills refers to Ezra 1-6 but the study puts the discussion in the broader analysis of the whole text of Ezra-Nehemiah.

been referred to earlier, in chapter one, as simple categorisation. Having presented the contents of Ezra-Nehemiah, the study moves on to the next stage of this chapter, namely, a discussion of the use of the concepts of "all Israel" and the temple in Ezra-Nehemiah.

2 The Concept of "All Israel"

This section will be divided into two main subsections, namely, Israel and "All Israel". The first subsection will briefly look at the concept of Israel generally, and the second one particularly into the concept of "all Israel".

2.1 Israel (עִשׂרָאֵל)

The word יִשְׂרָאֵל(Israel) appears for the first time in the Bible in Genesis 32:28 when it was given as a name to Jacob – son of Isaac, son of Abraham – by a man with whom he wrestled for the whole night. It was a personal name for an individual. In line with the covenant between God and Israel's grandfather, Abraham (Gen.12:1-3)[114], Israel's twelve sons multiplied to become a great nation. Each of the twelve sons represented a tribe/clan which was in turn a constituent of the nation of Israel, named after their ancestor Jacob/Israel (Gen. 49:28). In other words, the name Israel became an ethnic border[115]. An ethnic border encloses a particular group of people as a distinct ethnic group vis-à-vis other surrounding ethnic groups. This means, the twelve tribes were enclosed inside the border that designated Israel. All those who were outside the ethnic border, did not have a share in the privileges of being Israel. During the time of slavery in Egypt, they were this ethnic group of twelve tribes. The Exodus was a phenomenon of the twelve tribes of Israel under the leadership of Moses (Exod. 24:4). The Conquest was carried out by the twelve tribes under the leadership of Joshua (Jos. 4:8)[116]. Describing the state of affairs concerning the twelve tribes during the monarchical era, LaBianca (2000) says:

[114] The meaning of the name, whether in the form of Abram or Abraham is "the father is exalted" (McCarter Jr 2000:9).

[115] Because the study uses ethnicity – which is a very late concept for the biblical writers– as an identity mode to investigate identity formation in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, the word nation will be interchangeably used with the word ethnic group.

[116] According to Miller and Hayes (2006): "Whatever one says about Israel's origins and early history depends on how one interprets the evidence from three sources: epigraphy, archaeology and the Hebrew Bible" (2006:3). The source of history outlined above is the Hebrew Bible. Basing his judgments on archaeology, Coote (2000) asserts that Israel originated as a typical tribal formation in the Late Bronze Age Palestine and this formation participated with others in the gradual extensive resettlement of the highlands throughout the Early Iron Age. The main impetus for this resettlement was not a concerted conquest of one people by another, but rather the complex set of factors that drive the cycle of extension and contraction of settlement and agriculture in the long-term history of Palestine" (2000:275-276). He argues that the narrative of the conquest reflects the interests of

> While the rise of kings involved introduction of a transient, supratribal layer of bureaucratic organisation, it did not extinguish the premonarchical tribal social order. Instead, this order accommodated itself to the new supratribal monarchical order. ... The persistence of the tribal order is reflected, in part, in the continued association of particular tribes with their traditional tribal territories throughout the monarchical period. It was also reflected in residential proximity of kindred and patterns of cooperation and conflict throughout the period (2000:1334).

Until the national schism during the reign of Rehoboam Israel referred to the tribes represented by the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel (1 Kgs. 12:16). The schism resulted into two kingdoms, namely, the northern kingdom of Israel comprised of ten tribes and the southern kingdom of Judah comprised of Judah and Benjamin. From the schism onwards, the name Israel did not have the same meaning anymore. It referred to different people in different contexts. It is against this background that this study understands the concept of "all Israel".

2.2 "All Israel" (כל-עשראל)

The concept of "all Israel" appears eight times in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah. The idea is expressed in other forms as well but the exact expression occurs eight times.[117] In one occasion the concept is used referring to the monarchic period (Neh.13:26). It refers to King Solomon and his subjects as "all Israel". In other words it refers to the twelve tribes as they were before the schism. In five instances it refers to the exiles under Ezra and Nehemiah as "all Israel" (Ezra 2:70, 8:25, 10:5; Neh. 2:72 [Eng 2:73]; 12:47). In this instance it means those who were present at that particular time and place represented the whole of Israel, none were missing. Two times it is used specifically with reference to the twelve tribes as represented in the second temple exilic community that was in Yehud (Ezra 6:17; 8:35). Nehemiah 13:26 needs no further probing because it is used similarly than in other parts of the Bible. The other seven instances however, need some more examination for they seem to be unique to Ezra-Nehemiah. The five which refer to the exiles as "all Israel" will be examined as one group and the two which refer to the twelve-tribe notion as a different group.

2.2.1 Exiles as "all Israel"

The presupposition being tested by this chapter claims that the book of Ezra-Nehemiah purports an exclusive ethnic ideology. This section is going to scrutinise the use of the

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the house of David late in their rule over Judah, and was probably formulated at that time (2000:275). This is an indication of different arguments concerning the origin of Ancient Israel.

[117] "All Judah" (Neh. 13:12); "all the people" (Ezra 3:11; 10:9) and Nehemiah 8 eleven times and "all the people of Judah and Benjamin" (Ezra 10:9).

concept of "all Israel" in these five verses and conclude whether they purport an exclusive ethnic ideology or not:

Ezra 2:70

וַיֵּשְׁבוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וּמִן־הָעָם וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים וְהַשּׁוֹעֲרִים וְהַנְתִינִים בְּעָרֵיהֶם וְכָל־
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָרֵיהֶם

Translation: *The priests, the Levites, and some of the people lived in Jerusalem and its vicinity; and the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants lived in their towns, and all Israel in their towns.*

This verse wraps up the whole of the second chapter of the Ezra part of Ezra-Nehemiah. It is therefore imperative that we look at the chapter first in order to understand the verse in its own context. The chapter describes the settlement of the exilic returnees in the province of Judah who are referred to as "the people of the province" (בני המדנה) (Ezra 2:1). Ezra 2:2-35 contains a list of "the men of the people of Israel" (אנשי עם ישראל). The next section lists the temple personnel (Ezra 2:36-58). In Ezra 2:59-63 some who claimed descent of Israel but were excluded because their genealogy could not be proved are mentioned. Verses 64-69 give a sum of the people who were settled in Judah. It is these people who are referred to as "all Israel", meaning none were still missing, Israel was whole.

Williamson (1985) perceives this verse as a means of easing the transition to the later narrative. However, he reasons that the suggestion of the once-for-all dispersal of a huge returning caravan would be historically a gross over-simplification (1985:38). More interesting for our discussion however, is a comment by Grabbe (1998) on the list of "the men of the people of Israel" that is summarised by this verse when he says:

> What this list does above all is inventory the population solely in terms of returnees; there is no hint that others were already living in the land or that they might also have rights. This chapter is firmly in the tradition of 'the myth of the empty land' (Grabbe 1998:11).

Concerning the rejection of those who could not be found in the genealogical records, Blenkinsopp (1988) remarks that "it also illustrates the fierce determination of a segment of Babylonian Jewry to maintain its identity against the threat of assimilation (1988:91-92). The most striking remark however, is by Grabbe (1998) when he says:

> This is understandable with regard to the priests since the priesthood was purely a matter of proper descent, but the idea that people could be excluded from 'Israel' because of ethnic descent goes against

[118] All the translations for these verses are taken from the RSV translation.

> everything else in the OT. Gentiles were allowed to convert and the three families of lay Israelites excluded seem to have been observing the Jewish law, including circumcision, since non-observance is likely to have been mentioned (Grabbe 1998:12).

Wills (2008) expressing a similar sentiment says: "Ezra's reaction reflects a separation much stronger than was previously the case in Israel" (2008:66). The comments mentioned above illustrate that the remainees and other Yahwists who were not found in this particular list were excluded as Israelites. This sentiment is clearly conveyed by Blenkinsopp's (1988) concluding remarks in the analysis of Ezra 2:70. Soothing the anomalies identified above, Blenkinsopp (1988) argues that the author "can at least ignore the severe problems created by relations with the native population since for him the land was already depopulated. This was therefore a new beginning ... The diaspora group is 'all-Israel', the authentic Israel of the early days" (1988:96). Despite Blenkinsopp's approach, the fact is people of Israelite descent are excluded from Israel. The concept of "all Israel" in this verse is used under these circumstances. The study therefore concludes that verse 2:70 is used exclusively.

Ezra 8:25

(וָאֶשְׁקוֹלָה) [וָאֶשְׁקְלָה] לָהֶם אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף וְאֶת־הַזָּהָב וְאֶת־הַכֵּלִים תְּרוּמַת

בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַהֲרִימוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ וְיֹעֲצָיו וְשָׂרָיו וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּמְצָאִים

Translation: *And I weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the vessels, the offering for the house of our God that the king, his counselors, his lords, and all Israel there present had offered;*

Chapter 8 describes the journey of Ezra and his entourage from Babylon to Jerusalem. Verses 1-14 are about the returnees who were with Ezra. After realizing that there were no Levites, Ezra sent for some (8:15-20). Ezra then held prayer and fasting as an indication of the seriousness of their journey (8:21-23). Arrangements are made for the carrying of the treasure which was with Ezra (8:24-30). They then journeyed and arrived safely (8:31-36).

The verse in which the concept of "all Israel" is used in this chapter is linked to the donations which Ezra and his group received. Verse 25 refers to people who donated to Ezra for the temple. These are the king, his counselors and his lords. On top of that "all Israel there present had offered". It is in this last group of people that our interest lies: "all Israel there present". According to Klein (1999) they are "those Israelites in Babylon who were not

returning." The niphal participle הַנִּמְצָאִים[119] that accompanies "all Israel" seems not to be generalizing but specifying which group of Israelites exactly donated to Ezra. The NRSV translates הנמצים וכל־עשׂראל as "and all Israel there present". The DRA and the LXE translations translate the phrase as "and all Israel, that were found". The NAB translates it as "and all the Israelites of that region". The YLT translates it as "and all Israel – those present – …". In this sense the perception is that they received donations from all those Israelites they went to and found, or all those Israelites who were present there, or of that region. In all, the present study interprets this phrase as referring to those of the exiles who could be reached. None of them declined to offer. Understood in this sense, the use of "all Israel" in this verse is not used exclusively. It is only indicating that not each and every exile was reached, maybe because of time constraints, but those who were reached all donated. One may also argue that the concept is used to differentiate the exiles who donated from the Persian officials who also donated. However, if one reads this clause in terms of the introductory statement in Ezra 1:5, the perception changes. Ezra 1:5 states as follows: "The heads of the families of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites – everyone whose spirit God had stirred – got ready to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD in Jerusalem." An interesting analysis of Ezra 5:1 is done by Williamson (1985). He explains as follows:

> The returning group, as often in Ezra-Nehemiah, is divided into the three classes of priests, Levites and the laity. For the latter stand "the heads of families" (תּוֹבֵי שֵׁ) ... This is the regular sociological division of the people in the Persian period, the "father's house" being an extended family standing between the larger tribe and the smaller family grouping, equivalent to the החפשמ ("family") of the pre-exilic period. Three tribes Judah, Benjamin and Levi, are thus represented. This, again, is typical of the outlook of Ezra-Nehemiah, in which these three, being the continuation of the former southern kingdom of Judah, are regarded as the only true community (1985:15).

According to this study, the theological element that Williamson introduces in Ezra 1:5 taints the clause in Ezra 8:25. Understood in this sense, the use of "all Israel" in Ezra 8:25 is used exclusively.

Ezra 10:5

וַיָּקָם עֶזְרָא וַיַּשְׁבַּע אֶת־שָׂרֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה וַיִּשָּׁבֵעוּ

Translation: *Then Ezra stood up and made the leading priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear that they would do as had been said. So they swore.*

[119] Verb niphal participle, masculine plural absolute from the stem אצמ, meaning to find.

Chapter 10 continues a story started in chapter 9. The exiles sinned by marrying "foreign women". Ezra prayed, made confession, weeping and throwing himself down while a very great assembly of men, women and children gathered to him, also weeping bitterly (Ezra 10:1). After the people responded and a solution was found, "Ezra stood up and made the leading priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear that they would do as had been said. So they swore". "All Israel" was made to swear. They were made to take action and the action is described as follows:

> They made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles that they should assemble at Jerusalem and that if any did not come within three days, by order of the officials and the elders all their property should be forfeited, and they themselves banned from the congregation of the exiles (Ezra 10:7-8).

Interesting for the study is the specificity of the people summoned, namely, "all the returned exiles". Ezra made "all Israel" to swear and on the basis of that, all the relevant people are called, namely, "all the returned exiles". Arguing for the sectarian character of the *gôlah* as profiled in Ezra-Nehemiah, Blenkinsopp (2009) observes the happenings of Ezra 10 and concludes as follows:

> We are dealing in the first place with those referred to in the book as *haggôlâ* or *bĕnê-haggôlâ*, a Judeo-Babylonian group which voluntarily relocated in Judah and, at least in theory, segregated itself from the indigenous population. It had its own assemblies (Ezra 10:8, 14), maintained control over its members, and exercised the right to excommunicate deviants including those who failed to take part in its assemblies (Ezra 10:8; Neh 13:3). It was prepared to go to extreme lengths, beyond any explicit statement of law, to exclude marriage with outsiders. It reinforced its corporate identity and bound its members to it by covenants which, rather than enjoining commitment to the law in general terms as in the standard Deuteronomic formulations, featured stipulations relating to the *gôlah* group's own specific commitments confirmed by an oath to which the participants appended their names (2009:198-199).

Blenkinsopp (2009) argues for the sectarian character of the Ezra-Nehemiah *gôlah* group in the above passage. He argues that it is sectarian not in breaking away from the mother body, but in claiming the right to constitute Israel to the exclusion of other claimants. He argues that the *gôlah* corresponds to the introversionist type of sect by virtue of its self-segregation not only from the Gentile world but also from other Jews who did not share its theology and agenda (2009:199). Blenkinsopp therefore argues for the sectarian character of the Ezra-Nehemiah community. Nevertheless, his identification of the attitude of the Ezra-Nehemiah community also helps to understand the phrase "all the exiles" used in this chapter. The

phrase in turn is used in connection with "all Israel" who were made to swear. The use of the concept of "all Israel", as the study reasons, is used based on the sectarianism that Blenkinsopp perceives and is therefore exclusive.

Nehemiah 7:72 [Eng. 7:73]

וַיֵּשְׁבוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְהַשּׁוֹעֲרִים וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים וּמִן־הָעָם וְהַנְּתִינִים וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָרֵיהֶם וַיִּגַּע הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָרֵיהֶם

Translation: *So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants, and all Israel settled in their towns*.

The verse we are concerned with here is Nehemiah 7:72 (in Hebrew; 7:73 in English). It summarizes Nehemiah 7 which is about the list of exiles who returned to occupy Judah and Jerusalem. The text repeats the list found in Ezra 2:1–70 with slight differences between the two (Neh. 7:69-72//Ezra 2:68-70). Verse 72a, which is the specific verse for our discussion, summarizes Nehemiah 7. Nehemiah 7:72b introduces Nehemiah 8 (Williamson 2004:296; Miller & Hayes 2006:499, 528, 535; Blenkinsopp 2009:61, 103, 168). Nehemiah 7:72a introduces nothing new when compared to Ezra 2:70. However, the chapter carries a theological message. It gives an impression that there were no people who occupied Judah when the exiles returned. What is actually happening here is the implementation of what is called "the myth of the empty land" (Grabbe 1998:11). As it was argued in chapter four, the "empty land" ideology is in fact an ideological strategy by the exiles to delete the remainees from the history of Judah (Seitz 1989:278-279; Lipschits 2005:119; Davies 2005:136). The "empty land" ideology was extensively discussed in chapter four and was dismissed as not a fact but just an ideological strategy. As the concept of "all Israel" in Nehemiah 7:72 (Eng 7:73) is used in the context of the "empty land" theme, the study concludes that it is used exclusively.

Nehemiah 12:47

בִּימֵי זְרֻבָּבֶל וּבִימֵי נְחֶמְיָה וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל נֹתְנִים מְנָיוֹת הַמְשֹׁרְרִים וְהַשֹּׁעֲרִים דְּבַר־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ וּמַקְדִּשִׁים לַלְוִיִּם וְהַלְוִיִּם מַקְדִּשִׁים לִבְנֵי אַהֲרֹן

Translation: *In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah all Israel gave the daily portions for the singers and the gatekeepers. They set apart that which was for the Levites; and the Levites set apart that which was for the descendants of Aaron.*

Describing Nehemiah 12, Grabbe (1998) indicates:

> The fondness for lists in the book reaches a ridiculous point with this chapter. The chapter begins with a list of the priests and Levites who came up with Zerubbabel and Joshua (12:1–26), even though

> Nehemiah 7 has already given such a list only a few chapters earlier. From a literary point of view, it seems to make little sense; however, if one thinks of someone trying to compile an archive, it looks more reasonable (1998:58).

The chapter can be divided into three sections. Verses 1-26 outline a list of the priests and Levites who came up with Zerubbabel and Joshua. Verses 27- 43 describe the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem. The final section, verses 44-47, an arrangement is made to store and distribute gifts for the temple personnel. In verse 44 it is mentioned that Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who ministered. Remarking on the use of Judah or Judean in Nehemiah, Wills (2008) asserts that "whereas the use of 'Judah' may be expected – after all, 'Israel and Judah' were old terms for the north and south – its use here together with *Yehudi*, Judean, takes on a stronger sense: the 'temple community'" (2009:79). The study reasons in the same vein, for there were other Judeans who were not part of the celebration. The celebrants were only the exiles. In verse 45 it is claimed that the cult was practiced as it was commanded by David and his son Solomon. The exiles who have now become Judah perform the religious practices as they were commanded by David and Solomon. Verse 46 reinforces the connection with David. The narrator explains that the custom of having choir directors to lead the choirs in hymns of praise and thanks to God began long ago in the days of David and Asaph. Lastly, in verse 47, the narrator describes the activities of the temple community. The verse states that "all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah gave the daily portions for the singers and the gatekeepers; and they set apart that which was for the Levites; and the Levites set apart that which was for the sons of Aaron". it attracts the study's attention that the narrator demarcates the period from the time of Zerubbabel to Nehemiah. According to Williamson (1985), this verse "expands the vision of the well-ordered community to include the days of Zerubbabel as well as the whole of the period of Nehemiah" (1985:385). The study recollects that Zerubbabel is the one who rejected the so-called people of the land from participating in the building of the temple. Nehemiah is the one who vehemently opposed them during his tenure. The period bracketed with Zerubbabel and Nehemiah is therefore a period of animosity directed to the "people of the land". According to Nehemiah 12:47 this is the period of a "well-ordered" community, in which "all Israel" recovered her sanctity. The Judean community is perfect and whole without the other Yahwists who were around them. These circumstances are exclusive and therefore the use of "all Israel" in such a context is exclusive.

2.2.2 The Twelve-Tribe Theme

Having examined the exiles as "all Israel", let us now examine the use of "all Israel" in connection with the twelve-tribe theme.

Ezra 6:17

וְהִקְרִ֨בוּ לַחֲנֻכַּ֜ת בֵּית־אֱלָהָ֣א דְנָה֮ תּוֹרִין֒ מְאָ֣ה דִכְרִ֗ין מָאתַ֤יִן אִמְּרִין֙ אַרְבַּ֣ע מְאָ֔ה וּצְפִירֵ֥י עִזִּ֖ין לְחַטָּיָ֑א עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל֙ תְּרֵי־עֲשַׂ֔ר לְמִנְיַ֖ן שִׁבְטֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵֽל

Translation: *They offered at the dedication of this house of God one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.*

Ezra 6 can be divided into three broad sections: 1-12: The Decree of Darius; 13-18: Completion and Dedication of the Temple; and 19-22: Celebration of the Passover. It is in the second division, in verse 17, where "all Israel" is used. Ezra 6:13-18, therefore, is the section that attracts the attention of this discussion. This section can still be divided into two subsections. The subsection 13-15 is about the building and the completion of the temple. The other subsection, 16-18, presents the celebration of the dedication of the temple. This section condenses a period of twenty four years in only six verses. It starts from the declaration of Cyrus (539 BC) and ends at the completion of the temple (515 BC). However, the significance for this discussion lies in how the narrative is presented. The narrator did not take much trouble to verify the historical accuracy of the narrative. On the other hand, the narrative is dense with theological ideas. In verse 14 there is an anachronistic mention of Artaxerxes. The temple was completed in 515 BC and Artaxexes I ascended the throne in 465 BC. On the other hand, the short passage is painted with at least three theological formulae. In verse 16 the community is divided into the typical class divisions in Ezra-Nehemiah, namely, the priests, the Levites and the laity. This class division was discussed above when we examined Ezra 8:25. In verse 17 the concept of "all Israel" and the twelve-tribe theme are combined. Describing this scenario, Williamson (1985) observes as follows:

> At this solemn moment, the community is understood to be not just men of Judah, but to represent the whole "people of Israel". This accounts too, our author is careful to point out, for the number of he-goats presented as a sin-offering (1985:84).

The author associates the offering of twelve he-goats with the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. In Blenkinsopp's (1988) words, "the twelve-tribe theme … is one way of saying that the historical Israel is now located in this particular group which has rediscovered its identity and links with the past after a long period of alienation" (1988:130). In another book, Blenkinsopp (2009) argues that "all Israel" in Ezra 6:17, among other verses, is "used with

exclusive reference to the *golah* group in the Achaemenid province of Judah except where the allusion is purely historical" (2009:20). To put the use of "all Israel" in this subsection into perspective, taking into account the above deliberations of Blenkinsopp, this subsection is being concluded with the words of Miller and Hayes (2006) saying:

> Various interpretations and differing accounts of the "restoration" of authentic Jewish existence after the calamitous judgment of Yahweh in the fall of Jerusalem are found in Jewish tradition. Underlying these are the assumption that the exile marked a radical break in authentic existence, that proper restoration was the work of those who had actually experienced being in exile, and that the renewed community must in some sense be new and uncontaminated and yet stand in continuity with conditions that had existed prior to the exile (2006:512).

If the combination of the twelve-tribe theme and the "all Israel" concept in Ezra 6:17 is interpreted according to the last sentence of the quotation of Miller and Hayes, also taking into account Blenkinsopp's arguments above, the perspective in which the concept of "all Israel" is used is exclusive.

Ezra 8:35

הַבָּאִים מֵהַשִּׁבי בְנֵי־הַגּוֹלָה הִקְרִיבוּ עֹלוֹת לֵאלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרִים שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵילִים תִּשְׁעִים וְשִׁשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים שִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעָה צְפִירֵי חַטָּאת שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר הַכֹּל עוֹלָה לַיהוָה

Translation: *At that time those who had come from captivity, the returned exiles, offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and as a sin offering twelve male goats; all this was a burnt offering to the Lord.*

Ezra 8 has already been subdivided when Ezra 8:25 was being discussed. In many respects Ezra 8:35 resembles Ezra 6:17. "On both occasions the primary aim is the restoration of worship, especially sacrificial worship", explains Blenkinsopp (2009:49). However, the number of the offered animals is far less than in Ezra 6:17, except for the equal number of male goats, observes Yamauchi (1988:661-662). "The repetition of the sin offering (*ḥaṭṭā't*; cf. 6:17) acknowledges that the period preceding the return was one of infidelity", Blenkinsopp adds (1988:173). More striking in Ezra 8:35, which is more emphasised than in Ezra 6:17, is the number twelve. The common denominator for all the numbers in Ezra 8:35 is twelve, with the exception of the lambs, which are seventy-seven. Blenkinsopp (1988) argues that in Ezra 8:35 there is "the obvious concern to bring into play once again the number symbolic of the old Israel: twelve and its multiples [96 and 72]" (1988:173). For seventy-two instead of seventy-seven[120] he uses 1 Esdras 8:65 and Josephus, *Ant*. 11.137 as sources (1988:171). Describing the relationship between the Hebrew Ezra-Nehemiah and the

1 Esdras texts Grabbe (1998) states as follows:

> Most of the time 1 Esdras is very similar to the text of Ezra, evidently word for word the same when allowance is made for the fact that one text is in Greek and the other in Hebrew and Aramaic. Differences include some small discrepancies in names and numbers of the list in 8:28–40 (//Ezra 8:1–14), the number of temple vessels in 8:56 (//Ezra 8:27), the name of one of the Levites in 8:62 (//Ezra 8:33), and the number of lambs sacrificed in 8:63[121] (//Ezra 8:35) (1998:75).

The same verse in Ezra 8:35 is found in 1 Esdras 8:63 [Eng. 8:66] with the difference of seventy-two lambs (αρνας εβδομήκοντα δύο) instead of seventy-seven lambs (כְּבָשִׂים שִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעָה). Given that it has already been argued that the link between the exilic community and the pre-exilic community was very important to portray the exiles as the true Israel and that the number twelve makes that link, the verse in 1 Esdras is preferred in this instance, assuming that the Ezra-Nehemiah editor made a mistake by inserting seven instead of two. If that route is followed, 1 Esdras 8:65-66 thus read as follows:

> [65]And those who had come back from captivity offered sacrifices to the Lord, the God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams (*96÷8=12*), [66]seventy-two lambs (*72÷6=12*), and as a thank offering twelve he-goats – all as a sacrifice to the Lord.[122]

In 8:35 (1 Esdras 8:63) just as in Ezra 8:25 above, the use of the concept of "all Israel' is used exclusively. It refers to the exiles as the true Israel at the expense of the other tribes of Israel.

3 Theological/Ideological presentation of the temple

In the foregoing discussion it has been argued that the concept of "all Israel" in Ezra-Nehemiah is used exclusively. Now that we are bringing the temple into the discourse, it is important to show the connection in these two items. In chapter three when we discussed Ezra-Nehemiah's idea of holiness, we claimed that holiness as a purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah is ideological; an exclusive one to be precise. We further asserted that for an ideology to be effective, it needs to manifest itself in different spheres of the community's life. It needs to manifest itself in the community institutions, in literature, in the spoken language, in the members' behavior etc. In the previous discussion, we examined Ezra-Nehemiah's exclusive

[120] According to Blenkinsopp (1988) the "MT has 'seventy-three'" (1988:171).
[121] The English text is 8:66.
[122] Numbers and mathematical signs inserted by the researcher.

ideology as manifested in spoken language in the form of the concept of "all Israel". In the same spirit, the temple, as a community institution, is being examined. They are spheres of life in which ideology can be concretized. To investigate the role of the temple in Ezra-Nehemiah we will explore Ezra 4:1-3 and Nehemiah 13:4-8.

3.1 Ezra 4:1-3

The passage reports of the people referred to as adversaries of Judah and Benjamin. The so-called adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building the temple to the Lord. They decided to approach Zerubbabel and the heads of families. They asked to be allowed to participate in the building of the temple. They stated two reasons for their request, namely, that they also seek the same God and they have been sacrificing to Him since the Assyrian king Esarhaddon brought them there. Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of families "in Israel" rejected their request. They asserted that they [adversaries] will have no part in the building of the temple. They [exiles] will build it alone. They supported their statement by saying Cyrus commanded it that way.

The subjects of the first verse are introduced as adversaries of Judah and Benjamin (צָרֵי יְהוּדָה וּבִנְיָמִן). The author, in his introduction, presupposes that the men who approached Zerubbabel and the heads of families were "the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin". We do not have information as to why they are declared enemies. It therefore remains an arbitrary declaration of the author. The author also tells us that when they "heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the Lord, the God of Israel", they approached the representatives of the returned exiles. However, he does not describe the motive to approach the exiles so that we can determine whether it is a positive or negative motive. He leaves it to the subjects themselves to express it.

When the so-called adversaries arrive, they describe their motive as an intention to pledge solidarity in the building project. Their motivation is that they worship the same God as the exiles and they have been sacrificing to Him [God] since they arrived in that land. If their motive is to pledge solidarity and contribute towards the building of the temple, it is difficult to view this motive as negative. In fact, it is a positive motive. It is also important to note what motivates them. It is because they worship the same God as the exiles. Again, it is difficult to find negativity in the motivation as well. On the contrary, they describe themselves as fellow Yahwists, which sounds more like partners than adversaries. Kessler

(2009) describes the debate of whether the rejection of the offer was justifiable or not in the following manner:

> Much discussion surrounds the issue whether the allusion to the "men of their place" (1:4) who financially support the returnees refers to Jews who remain or to Gentile neighbors. While the matter is by no means easy to decide, with Williamson and many others I favor the former position. If this is the case, the Diaspora members are viewed as standing in solidarity with the returnees, despite their remaining behind (2009:128-129).

Williamson (1985) describes the reason as "quite correct" politically, for in 1:2-4 Cyrus authorized them to build the temple and including other people could have jeopardized their chances. He therefore identifies the "self-confessed foreign origin" as sufficient reason for exclusion. He then further hesitates to claim there might have been "an inherently religious exclusivism … behind this politically understandable response" (1985:50). In another book Williamson (2004) argues that "the rejection of the northern offer of help in rebuilding is not unintelligible if Judah was a separate province and if the motive was to abide close to the terms of Cyrus' authorization for sound political reasons" (2004:15). In a similar argument, Blenkinsopp (1988) avers that the rejection of the offer was justified on the technical point that those making it were not mentioned in the imperial proclamation. "The real reason was, of course, quite different … The fact that opposition to the resurgence of Judah continued to come predominantly from this region suggests a political motivation for both the offer and the rejection", he continues (1998:107). However, Farisani (2002) argues to the contrary. According to Farisani:

> The Cyrus decree (Ezra 1:2-4) encourages the people to rebuild the temple, but it does not go into the details of specifying who should, who should not, and how it should be done. Cyrus encourages the returning exiles to ask for assistance by or from 'the peoples around them' (Ezra 1:4) … (2002:127).

Farisani refutes the political correctness of this reason. He argues that, based on this decree, the returned exiles cannot claim that Cyrus forbade other groups from helping them in the rebuilding process. Farisani argues that the reason for the refusal of the offer is a religious one – which Williamson hesitates to claim. According to Farisani, it "is the attitude of the returned exiles that the hope for the future lay only with themselves, not with the residue of Israel, who had remained in the land. He also counters the "self-confessed foreign origin" as reason by arguing that they worshipped Yahweh long before the returned exiles went to exile and during all the time they were in exile. Miller and Hayes (2006) take the argument even further. They add another dimension into the discussion. Their argument is as follows:

> A primary tension of the time seems to have centered around conflicts between "the people of the land" (those who had not gone into exile) and "the sons of the exile" (those returning from exile). Nonreturning Yahweh worshippers, who no doubt included some persons from the province of Samaria, sought to participate in the rebuilding of the temple but were rebuffed by the returnees (Ezra 4:3). This exclusivism of the returnees and rejection of the offer of help were probably partially based on economic conflict over the rights to property that had been taken over by those not exiled (see Jer. 39:10; 2 Kgs. 25:12; Ezek. 11:15) (Miller & Hayes 2006:521).

Miller and Hayes' argument corroborates what has been argued by Hanson (1979), as presented earlier. Referring to the rebuilding of the temple, Hanson argued that it "involved more than religious considerations, narrowly construed, as can best be understood by reference to the law regulating land tenure in Lev 25:23".[123] Hanson describes it as follows:

> Yahweh is the land owner, which translated into the realities of economics would read thus: those having a part in the rebuilding of Yahweh's temple, and thereby establishing their membership in his temple community, would be entitled to share in Yahweh's land, those excluded from the rebuilding and from the temple community would forfeit that claim (1979:240).

One thing that the study can confirm with certainty is that losing membership of the exilic community had economic implications (Ezra 10:8).

To conclude this section, the study will examine the three dimensions of the debate: political, religious and economic. The reason why the study chooses these dimensions is because the first two are reasons brought forward by the parties involved for their actions. In Ezra 4:3, the group of Zerubbabel and Jeshua claim that the so-called enemies cannot be part of the project as King Cyrus has commanded them. It is a political reason that they forward. The study is interested in the truthfulness of this claim. The "adversaries" on the other hand, argue that they want to be part of the project because they worship Zerubbabel's God as he and his fellow worshippers do (Ezra 4:2). This claim is religious and is also worthy to be investigated whether it carries any merit. The third one is also worthy of investigation although it does not feature in the conversation. In some instances of social categorization, economic reasons may be part of the motives although they might not be openly acknowledged. The study reasons that it is worthwhile to investigate whether being part of the temple establishment encompasses any economic benefits.

Ezra 1:4 stipulates as follows:

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[123] The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants (Leviticus 25:23).

וְכָל־הַנִּשְׁאָר מִכָּל־הַמְּקֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר הוּא גָר־שָׁם יְנַשְּׂאוּהוּ אַנְשֵׁי מְקֹמוֹ

Translation: *And all who remained from all the places where he is a sojourner there, let men from his place help him.*

At the political level, the study concurs with Farisani that there is nothing that forbids people who want to help from doing so. People from any returnee's vicinity are requested to help. The study therefore does not find the decree as a genuine reason to reject the offer.

At a religious level, some northerners did worship in Judah during the exile (Jer. 41:5). Describing the scenario referred to in Jeremiah 41:5 Coulibaly (2006) tells as follows:

> ... a group of eighty people approach Mizpah ... The people in the group have come from important cities in Israel: Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria. These people have heard of the disasters that have struck the city of Jerusalem and particularly the temple, and they are coming to mourn for the city and the house of the Lord, as is shown by their shaved beards and torn clothes. They have also *cut themselves* as a sign of mourning ... They have also come to make offerings and to burn incense (2006:907).

From the northerners in Jeremiah 41:5 genuine concern for the city of Jerusalem and the temple of Jerusalem can be detected. This genuine concern demonstrated by these northerners in Jeremiah 41:5 is a reason to perceive a possibility of genuineness in the offer of the so-called adversaries of Judah and Benjamin.

According to Chavalas (2000), Esarhaddon ruled from 680 to 669 BC, after his father Sennacherib. He argues there are no records of such a deportation in the Assyrian annals (2000:419). Williamson (1985) as well argues there is no account of Esarhaddon, king of Syria, settling foreigners in Israel. However, in 2 Kings 17 there is an earlier settlement by Sargon II, confirms Williamson. For this reason, this claim of an additional later settlement is unlikely to be pure fabrication, so he argues. He further acknowledges historical texts of Esarhaddon's reign which testify to his successful campaigns in the west and which thus suggest a plausible setting for a policy of resettlement (1985:49). Williamson's argument renders an outright rejection of this claim somewhat inconsiderate.

Assessing the rejection of the offer from an economic point of view is not without merit when Hanson's (1979) discussion on Ezekiel 11:14-21 is taken into account. Hanson argues that Ezekiel 11:14-21 indicates that struggles involving land claims already caused dissension

between Jews in exile and those remaining in the land during Ezekiel's lifetime (1979:240-241). Hanson presents the argument as follows:

> These polemical confrontations between the conflicting claims of the g*ôlāh* and the inhabitants of Jerusalem before the return of the exiles to Palestine made even more acrimonious confrontation inevitable once the return had taken place. We know from the book of Ezra ... that the returnees, carrying with them a programme of restoration which was bound to an exclusive claim to being Yahweh's chosen community, refused to permit "the people of the land" to cooperate with them in the rebuilding efforts. The temple cult was their exclusive right. When we recall this cultic claim was tied up with the legal right to land tenure, we are not surprised to observe the bitter struggle which ensued between rival claimants (1979:242).

Having looked at three possible reasons for the rejection of the so-called adversaries, the study is open to an argument that perceives the rejection as having its roots prior to the issuing of the decree. From the study's point of view, the rejection was the manifestation of the concept of "all Israel" in concrete terms. The temple in Ezra 4:1-3 is thus used exclusively.

3.2 Nehemiah 13:4-9

This passage refers to a time when Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem after he had been away to "King Artaxerxes of Babylon" for some time. When Nehemiah came to Jerusalem "in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes" (Neh. 2:1), he stayed until "the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon" (Neh. 13:6), when he returned to him. In this passage, he had just asked for leave from the king. When he arrived, he found that the priest Eliashib, who presided over the chambers of the temple, and who was also related to Tobiah, "prepared for Tobiah a large room where they had previously put the grain offering, the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, wine, and oil, which were given by commandment to the Levites, singers, and gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests" (Neh. 13:5). To Nehemiah Eliashib's action was unacceptable, it angered him and he "threw all the household furniture of Tobiah out of the room" (Neh. 13:8).

This passage is different from the previous one in the sense that only one side of the story is presented. Neither Tobiah nor Eliashib says anything concerning the incident. The most viable approach in such a situation is to take a closer look at the characters of this episode from other parts of the Ezra-Nehemiah corpus and other sources outside Ezra-Nehemiah. The fact that Nehemiah tells the story in the first person suppresses the view of Eliashib the priest and Tobiah's as well. The author's introduction of the episode with a Scripture reading does

not neutralize the situation either. Knoppers (2007) notices the literary strategy of the author to justify the negative characterization of the "other". Knoppers expresses his observation in this manner:

> The work justifies this blanket and unambiguous negative characterization of the "other" by pursuing a number of complementary literary strategies. One such strategy involves depicting the actions of Nehemiah's opponents as diametrically opposed to the well-being of the Jerusalem community (2007:313).

The Scripture reading that introduces the passage justifies the marginalization of the Ammonites while Tobiah has been described by Nehemiah as an Ammonite (Neh. 2:10; 19; 4:3). Like in Ezra 4:1, the author's introduction pre-empts the action to follow. Since Eliashib and Tobiah have been silenced by the author, information which might shed light on these characters in this episode will be searched for elsewhere.

3.2.1 Tobiah

The name of Tobiah appears fifteen times in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah. Two times it appears among those who could not be found in the list of the returning exiles (Ezra 2:60; Neh. 7:62). According to Nehemiah, when he arrived in the province Beyond the River and prepared to rebuild and ultimately built the wall, Tobiah and his colleagues were displeased (Neh. 2:10), derided and despised them (Neh. 2:19), ridiculed them (Neh. 3:35 [Eng 4:3]) and they were ultimately very angry (Neh. 4:1[Eng 4:7]). When they heard "that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it [although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates]" (Neh. 6:1)**,** they invited him to a meeting in one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But, according to Nehemiah, they intended to do him harm (Neh. 6:2). They even hired people to prophecy against Nehemiah (Neh. 6:12). The tension escalated to an extent that Nehemiah prayed to God that He should remember Tobiah and Sanballat according to those things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make him afraid (Neh. 6:14). Nehemiah further reports: "Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them" (Neh. 6:17). "Also, they spoke of his (Tobiah) good deeds in his (Nehemiah) presence, and reported his (Nehemiah) words to him (Tobiah). And Tobiah sent letters to make him afraid" (Neh. 6:19).

In the above narrative it is still Nehemiah who is doing the narration. Commenting on the invitations of Nehemiah by Sanballat who was Tobiah's colleague, Grabbe (1998) says:

> ... the invitations to meet, which Nehemiah interpreted as ruses to do him in, could have been genuine efforts to come to some sort of *modus vivendi*. Sanballat might have realized that he had to accept Nehemiah's presence and a move at conciliation could be to mutual advantage. Having only Nehemiah's version of events means that evaluating the truth behind his accusations is difficult (1998:187).

The narrative as reconstructed above reveals two opposite attitudes towards Tobiah. Nehemiah is at loggerheads with Tobiah. The "nobles of Judah", on the other hand, are friendly with Tobiah. They spoke of Tobiah's good deeds in Nehemiah's presence and they communicated with Tobiah just as Tobiah also communicated with them. This set-up is reproduced in Nehemiah 13:4-8 as well: Nehemiah is at loggerheads with Tobiah and Eliashib the priest befriended Tobiah. Eliashib the priest, it seems, did not do something that was against the wishes of the other Judeans. In fact, Blenkinsopp (2009) demonstrates the strong ties that Tobiah had with the Judean community:

> Tobiah, head of the powerful transjordanian family based at 'Araq el-Emir, also had close associations with the staff of the Jerusalem temple (Neh 13:4-9) and with many well-connected Judean aristocrats (6:18). He had married into the Arahite family (6:17-19; Ezra 2:5 = Neh 7:10), and his father-in-law, Shecaniah, was of Davidic descent (1 Chr 3:21-22; cf. Ezra 8:3). In addition, his son Jehohanan was married to a daughter of Meshullam ben Berechiah, a family which may also have had Davidic connections (1 Chr 3:20) (2009:115).

The fact that Tobiah's occupation of the temple room was not an issue until Nehemiah came back – taking the relationship of the nobles of Judah with Tobiah into account – justifies a supposition that many Judeans approved Eliashib's action. This idea recurs in Blenkinsopp (1988)[124] – who is convinced that Eliashib the priest is not Eliashib the high priest– when he says: "It is difficult to see how he [Eliashib the priest] could have done so without the at least tacit approval of his namesake the high priest" (1988:354). Given this state of affairs and if a majority view is anything to go by, Tobiah was not an enemy of the Judeans but Nehemiah was the enemy of Tobiah.

There are other sources,[125] besides Ezra-Nehemiah, that have information concerning Nehemiah's so-called enemies. Reflecting on the expulsion of Tobiah from the temple, Grabbe (1998) firmly states that:

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[124] Knoppers holds the same view (2007:324).

[125] Two times Blenkinsopp (2009) indicates the availability of other sources: "… for the later history of the Tobiad dynasty we have other sources of information" (2009:112-113), and "there is onomastic evidence from

> He expelled Tobiah from the temple area where the high priest[126] had allowed him to set up shop. This may simply have been a way of dealing with an opponent, but it raises a curious issue because Tobiah was Jewish himself. However, many of the Jewish inhabitants of Judah were excluded from the community according to the ideology of Ezra-Nehemiah which refuses to recognize as kin those descendants of the Jews who were not taken captive. This appears to have been Nehemiah's view as well (Grabbe 1998:171).

According to Grabbe (1998), "Tobiah was a leading representative of the native Jews who had remained in the land and thus of particular danger to Nehemiah's plans. No wonder he was outraged when he found that Tobiah had penetrated not only within the city walls of Jerusalem but even to the temple court, all with the permission of the chief religious leader, the high priest [13:4–9]" (Grabbe 1988:173). This sentiment of Tobiah being a Judean is echoed in Wills' (2008) discussion of the redefinition of Tobiah's ethnic identity by Nehemiah. Wills (2008) expresses this view after discussing the redefinition of Sanballat's ethnic identity by Nehemiah too.[127] The discussion is presented as follows:

> The same redefinition of ethnic identity likely occurred with Tobiah. This figure has a name compounded with Yahweh ("My good is Yah", that is "My welfare is with Yahweh"), and was related by marriage to several Judean leaders (Neh 6:18). He was evidently the head of a wealthy Jewish trading family that moved between Jerusalem and Ammon – thus "the Ammonite". We hear about this family in later texts, records, and inscriptions, and in all of these later references the family is considered quite "Judean" and continues using names compounded with Yahweh. Thus Nehemiah has pushed this figure as well over an imaginary border to give him a foreign, rather than Judean identity, which Nehemiah insists on mentioning constantly (Wills 2008:73).

Blenkinsopp (1998) also adds to the voices that identify Tobiah as Judean. Referring to the six hundred and fifty-two laity in Nehemiah 7:62 which belonged to three "houses" – the houses of Delaiah, Tobiah and Nekoda – Blenkinsopp says: "Tobiah may be an ancestor of Nehemiah's opponent of the same name (see on Nehemiah 2:10) and the Tobiads, rivals of

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the Samaritan papyri …" (2009:115). Wills (2008) also indicates the availability of other sources about Tobiah's family: "We hear about this family in later texts, records, and inscriptions ..." (2008:73).

[126] Grabbe insists that the Eliashib who accommodated Tobiah in the temple was the high priest contrary to Blenkinsopp's argument that he was not (Blenkinsopp 1988:353).

[127] Wills (2008) describes the redefinition of Sanballat's ethnic identity by Nehemiah: "Sanballat was governor of Beyond the River (or Samaria), and was evidently an Israelite who worshipped Yahweh; his children had names compounded with Yahweh, and his daughter married the grandson of the Jerusalem high priest (Neh 13:28). Yet Nehemiah contemptuously refers to him in almost every instance as a "Horonite", which probably means one from Beth-horon, just north of the boundary between Israel and Judah, ten miles from Jerusalem. His use of the title Horonite has the effect of pushing Sanballat over an imaginary border as well. To Nehemiah he is not Sanballat the Israelite or Sanballat the Samarian or even Sanballat the governor of Beyond the River; he is Sanballat the Horonite" (Wills 2008:72).

the Oniads under the Diadochoi" (1988:92). Later in the book, still discussing the Tobiad family, Blenkinsopp (1988) concludes:

> We conclude, then, that Tobiah belonged to a distinguished Jerusalemite family with close ties to the high priesthood and the aristocracy, and that at the time of Nehemiah's mission he was the Persian-appointed governor of the Ammonite region (Blenkinsopp 1988:219).

Lastly, Knoppers (2007) also has an opinion about the identity of Tobiah. Knoppers' view is slightly different from the above to reconcile Nehemiah's persistent rejection of Tobiah. According to Knoppers (2007):

> These are all valid possibilities, but I am suggesting yet another possibility – namely, that Tobiah viewed himself as a member of one of Israel's other solidalities, perhaps one of the Transjordanian tribes. I raise this northern tribe thesis as an option for two reasons. The first involves Tobiah's place of residence, which in Israelite traditional lore was a geographic area associated with the Transjordanian tribes. The second reason involves Nehemiah's complete dismissal of Tobiah and his derisive references to him as "the Ammonite" or "the Ammonite slave" [Neh 2:10, 19; 3:35]" (2007:318).[128]

Grabbe, Wills and Blenkinsopp argue that Tobiah was Judean. On the other hand Knoppers suggests that Tobiah belonged to one of the Israelite tribes. Either way, Tobiah was an Israelite, most importantly, a Yahwist. This study is convinced by these arguments that Tobiah could have been a Judean and if he was not, at least he belonged to one of the Israelite tribes. One thing certain coming out of these arguments is that Tobiah had connections with Ammon; something that Nehemiah used as a weapon to destroy Tobiah's character.

3.2.2 Nehemiah

Having scrutinised Tobiah's background, it might help us to also scrutinise Nehemiah's circumstances in order to make sense of Nehemiah 13:4-9. Nehemiah's identity is not under question so it will serve no purpose to dig into his background. Workable to make sense of this passage is to rather scrutinise Nehemiah's character. From the beginning of the story in chapter two an atmosphere of war is created by the military escort. Grabbe (2004) describes the book of Nehemiah in this way: "A persistent theme through the book is the opposition

[128] Knoppers' thesis needs to be put into perspective. Some clarity is needed in terms of what Transjordan implies in relation to the Second Temple community. Younker's (2000) brief explanation can iron out some of the uncertainties about the relationship between Transjordan and Judea. According to Younker (2000), there appears to have been an Israelite enclave in Transjordan consisting mostly of the tribe of Reuben, sandwiched between Ammon and Moab, during much of the early part of the Iron Age. Israel also occupied for a time a stretch of the East side of the Jordan Valley, North of the Dead Sea, known as the Plain of Moab. While the political boundaries of Ammon, Moab and Edom generally coincided with the "natural" boundaries, varying political circumstances (which often included interaction with the kingdoms of Israel and Judah) did result in the movement of the political boundaries of these three Transjordanian kingdoms from time to time throughout the Iron Age [ca.1200-550] (2000:1328).

Nehemiah encountered, which seems to have arisen from the start (Neh 2:10)" (2004:298). Blenkinsopp (2009) describes the Nehemiah Memoir as giving the impression of enemies on every side (2009:112). Grabbe (2004) further argues that another reason "for opposition was clearly the personality of Nehemiah himself. Time and again his actions are confrontational or, at best, insensitive. He evidently had the knack of antagonizing those around him ... His actions said from the start he did not trust them" (2004:299). From the beginning of the narrative Nehemiah presupposes hostility. Unlike Ezra, he leaves for Jerusalem with "officers of the army and horsemen"[129] (cf. Eskenazi 1998:146-147). He is very secretive and carries out his reconnaissance of the wall under cover of the dark (cf. Eskenazi 1988:147; Grabbe 1988:158-159; 2004:299). Eskenazi (1988) paints a picture of Nehemiah's frame of mind as follows:

> Wordplay in Nehemiah's memoirs, especially Nehemiah 2, reveals much about his frame of mind. There is a striking repetition of the words טוב and רע "good" and "evil". They echo throughout the Nehemiah story and are most frequent in the early sections (esp. 2:1-10). One notes also the play in the name of his chief opponent, Tobiah. These indicate Nehemiah's polarized views of reality. Nehemiah sees the world in terms of good or evil, friend or foe … (1988: 146).

As it has been indicated above that not all community members followed Nehemiah's rules to the book, as in the case of Eliashib the priest, some community members interacted positively with people Nehemiah regarded as enemies. Like in 13:4-9, in 13:23-28 some Jews had allegedly married with "Ashdodite, Ammonite, and Moabite women" and Nehemiah set out to deal with the issue. Grabbe comments on Nehemiah's response in the following manner:

> The actions described are fully compatible with what we know of Nehemiah from elsewhere: he does not just force the violators to separate (as happens in Ezra 10). No, such simple reactions were not Nehemiah's way. He had to curse some and flog others. He even goes so far as to pull out the hair of some of them (unlike Ezra who tears his own hair!). Finally, he expelled the son of the high priest from the community for marrying the daughter of Sanballat (1988:171; 2004:307).

Finally, looking at chapter thirteen as a whole, Eskenazi concludes about the nature of Nehemiah. She describes his zeal as reminiscent of one who will help the elderly person across the street, whether that elderly person wants this or not. She argues that it is not at all clear that his subjects appreciate being liberated in the Nehemiah style. According to Eskenazi (1988), Nehemiah's direct intervention on behalf of the perceived oppressed (whether they wish it or not) is apparent in Nehemiah 13:4, 10, 15, 23, 28 (1988:146).

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[129] Nehemiah 2:9

The above discussion focused on Nehemiah as an individual, on his personal traits. It is fair to take Nehemiah's personal traits and put them in a broader framework. Being intolerant and easily provocable as he is, Nehemiah stood for an ideological school of thought fermented in exile and had to be implemented in Judah. Blenkinsopp (2009) describes this state of affairs as follows:

> Nehemiah is presented not only as a member of the upper-class *golah* segment of the population but also as an exponent of the rigorist legalism which characterised Ezra and his associates. This quasi-sectarian orientation, with its roots in the eastern diaspora and its orientation heavily dependent on Deuteronomistic theology and the teaching of Ezekiel and his school, was a significant factor in Nehemiah's conflictual relations with the lay and especially the priestly aristocracy in the province. His ejection of Tobiah from the temple precincts and ritual purification of the space he had occupied (13:4-9) is one pointer in this direction (Blenkinsopp 2009:115).

The fact that Blenkinsopp describes Nehemiah "as an exponent of the rigorist legalism which characterised Ezra" is what Grabbe (2004) calls the "crux of the matter". According to Grabbe (2004), Nehemiah was indeed a reformer with a programme that explains a number of his actions. Some of Nehemiah's actions in relation to the people of Yehud boil down to his personality, so says Grabbe. However, what eventually emerges is a man obsessed with a particular vision of the province of Yehud and of Judaism in its widest sense. "The various measures instigated by Nehemiah – whether the repair of the wall, the opposition to Sanballat and other 'foreigners', the ban on mixed marriages, or even the regulations about the Sabbath – were not just miscellaneous *ad hoc* decisions. Rather, they seem to have been part of a complete programme. In that sense, Nehemiah was very much a reformer. *His goal seems no less than to make Judah into an isolated puritanical theocratic state.* This programme is nowhere explicitly laid out in the book, but the whole thrust of the book is towards this goal" (Grabbe 2004:307; 1998:172). Unfortunately, this programme kick-started an identity formation process which produced what Wills (2008) calls an "opposition-creating-identity" (2008:59).

What transpire from the foregoing discussion are four things. The first one is that Tobiah was either a Judahite or a member of one of the Israelite tribes. The second thing is that Nehemiah by his own nature as an individual person was a very intolerant and an easily provoked man. Thirdly, Nehemiah was a zealot of an ethnic ideology that wanted a Yehud composed solely of the exiles of Judah and Benjamin descent. Lastly, Eliashib represented a group in the postexilic community which, while working along with Nehemiah, did not approve of his

ethnic ideology and whenever they had a chance, they would derail from it. However, because Nehemiah was in the position of power through his relationship with the incumbent Persian king, he always had his way. Additionally, it has also been discovered that the author as well plays a role by creating a conducive environment in advance for the protagonists to humiliate the antagonists – the so-called adversaries. The incident of Nehemiah 13:4-9 is understood in this light. Having outlined the results of the discussion, the big question remains: was the temple used in an exclusive manner in this passage? The answer is yes; it was used to serve the interests of the exclusivistic ethnic ideology of the exiles. One can say the concept of "all Israel", through the temple, is put into practice.

4 Implications for the Study

In the book of Ezra-Nehemiah there is an exclusive ethnic ideology[1]. The exiles reconstructed the history of Israel to include only those members of the Judah and Benjamin tribes who were exiled to Babylon. They distorted the well-known concept of "all Israel" which had serious implications for religious, social and economic relations. Both the external and internal enemies "understood 'Israel' to mean 'Greater Israel', the people who lived in the land of Judah and Samaria and worshipped God" (Wills 2008:67). According to Ezra-Nehemiah, "the reference to the experience of exile becomes determinative in distinguishing between insiders and outsiders" (Knoppers 2009:163). "Residence in the land of Israel is no longer a necessary or a sufficient criterion of Israelite ethnicity" (Knoppers 2009:164). Babylon, the land of the גוים (nations), is the headquarters of the Israelite religion. The leaders of the exiles were determined to reconstruct the history of the Israelite people. The fact that it were the leaders who were very much concerned about the shifting of the ethnic borders, as we see in the sections of both Ezra and Nehemiah, coincides with Barth's (1994) argument that emphasises the entrepreneurial role in ethnic politics. Barth argues that the mobilisation

[1] Bob Becking (2011) challenges such a perception. He refers to Vriezen and Van der Woude who argue that Ezra is "the founder of Judaism although his exploits provoked a particularistic and legal form of Judaism" (2011:22). According to Becking "the negative assessment of Ezra as pursuing Judaism in its particularistic and legal form should be abandoned" (2011:23). He argues that Ezra's fixation on his own group and his measures for mixed marriages need to be interpreted against their societal and political background. "The somewhat negative assessment 'particularistic' does not account for the symbolic meaning of the measures under consideration for the identity of this group. These measures helped them to survive and to endure in the immense and sometimes hostile Persian Empire", he concludes (2011:23). However, the study interprets the persistent defiance of these measures by the fellow exiles as an expression of security within these relationships than a threat to their survival. Moreover, the definition of Israel as the exiles despite the fact that there were Israelites who remained behind in Judah during the exile is perceived by the study as "particularistic". The hostility of the so-called enemies recorded in Ezra is precipitated by the rejection of these people by the leaders of the exiles (Ezra 4:1-5). For these reasons, the study argues to the contrary.

of ethnic groups in collective action is effected by leaders who pursue a political enterprise, and is not a direct expression of the group's cultural ideology (1994:12).

That the new identity was not a direct expression of the group's cultural ideology is demonstrated by the community's relapse into mixed marriages after every binding agreement they signed. Even the fact that Nehemiah's co-workers had good relations with Tobiah and did not make a secret about it is a sign of this. Blenkinsopp (2008) paints the picture of the "foreigner" problem in the Ezra-Nehemiah community very well when he says:

> It bears repeating that this kind of situation and these kinds of connections were the norm and not the exception in Jewish life in the province. The priests and laymen, lowly born and aristocrats, goldsmiths, apothecaries, and merchants who worked, voluntary or otherwise, on repairing the wall (Neh 3:1-32), the common people and their wives who complained about their desperate economic condition (5:1-5), the Jews whose children couldn't speak Hebrew (13:23-24) – not so different from the Jews on the island of Elephantine who had their own temple but traded and intermarried with their non-Jewish neighbours – remind the reader that the majority of Jewish people in the province at that time had very different ideas from those of Ezra and Nehemiah about what was or was not essentially implied in being Jewish (2009:115).

It is clear that in the province of Judah and in the diaspora there were representatives of Judaism very different from the kind which Ezra-Nehemiah was written to promote. Knoppers (2007) echoes Blenkinsopp's assertion on Nehemiah by saying:

> Occasionally, signs of internal resistance to and subversion of initiatives taken by the Judean leader appear.[130] These indications of opposition within the community and their relationships to the opposition external to the community are particularly interesting, because they suggest that the issues of community solidarity and group boundaries were not as firm and fixed as Nehemiah would have liked them to be. The very struggle of Artaxerxes' cupbearer to enforce his view of Judean identity in the community suggests that this identity was itself a contested issue (Knoppers 2007:316).

Grabbe (2004) phrases this tension between the leaders and the rank and file in a manner that really confirms the discord in the community.[131] It is also interesting to know that the book of Ezra-Nehemiah is evidence of the success of the reformers while the books of Chronicles do not show a bias against Samaria and the region to the north of Judah. Even Haggai and Zechariah, the prophets quoted in Ezra-Nehemiah, show no general hostility toward the 'people of the land' – mainly those descended from the Jews not deported by the Babylonians. The debate must have rumbled on for decades (Grabbe 2004:359).

Also of interest about Ezra-Nehemiah is the kind of social categorisation they emphasised. They emphasised simple categorisation. In chapter one it was argued that simple categorisation increases the chances of conflict. In the Nehemiah memoir there is violence. The way Nehemiah left Babylon as if he is going to a battle is a sign already of the attitude

[130] Neh. 5:1-9; 6:10-14, 17-18, 20-21, 23-28.

[131] Grabbe (2004) portrays the situation as follows: "The nobles, the high priest and his family, and others seem to have gone along with Nehemiah only up to a point and to have ignored him on some issues when they could. If a new law book was behind his measures, the priests apparently did not always interpret it the way Nehemiah and the 'tremblers' did. Judging from Jewish history over the next couple of centuries, the more extreme of the religious reforms – that is, those that isolated the community and restricted its intercourse with the surrounding peoples – were abandoned by the community as a whole, even if some continued to advocate them" (Grabbe 2004:358).

fermented by simple categorisation. In Nehemiah 13:21, Nehemiah displays a very hostile attitude. Talking to traders who waited for trade behind the wall he said: "Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you". Reporting about Judeans who relapsed into mixed marriages during his absence he says: "And I contended with them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, 'You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves'" (Nehemiah 13:25). Nehemiah's behaviour confirms the claims that simple categorisation increases chances of conflict.

5 Conclusion

What the study wanted to highlight in the contents of Ezra-Nehemiah and the subsequent discussions on "all Israel" and the temple is the connection between the central events on the one hand and the central people on the other. In exile, in Babylon, a law has been formulated to guide the exilic community. When an opportunity presented itself for those exiles who wanted to return to do so, that law became the guiding principle as to how the community should develop. The basic principle of this law is reflected in the language of the exiles, in the institutions revived by the exiles and is also supposed to be reflected in the actions of the revived community of the exiles. The key concept of the guiding principle of this law is exclusivity. They categorise the environment in a simple categorisation. Simple categorisation recognises only two extreme categories. By its nature, simple categorisation produces hostility between the two categories.

According to Kessler (2009) this state of affairs is not an innovation of the exiles but a continuation of an ongoing strife among the Yahwist circles.[132] Nevertheless, they rejected

[132] Kessler (2009) describes the situation as follows: "Ezra-Nehemiah's implicit acceptance of the ongoing existence of the eastern Diaspora as a legitimate expression of Yahwism is also explicable on the basis of social and theological location – specifically, the impact on the belief that the Babylonian golah was the sole guardian of Yahweh's revelation and the kernel out of which the future of the nation would come forth. It is noteworthy that Ezra-Nehemiah's definition of the remnant as exclusively as Jews who had been exiled to the east and returned was not an innovation. It reformulated an ongoing conflict within Yahwistic circles that began in the late sixth century regarding which group was to be considered the true heirs of the promises and, especially, the land. This conflict is evident in the "good and bad" figs metaphor in Jeremiah 24 and the debate over descent from Abraham and possession of the land in Ezekiel 11:14-21 and 33:23-29. Thus, even during the Babylonian period, within certain circles the community apart from any decision to return, because no return was possible. All of this probably stemmed from a growing self-perception on the part of the eastern Diaspora that they were an elect community, destined for the preservation and continuation of Yahweh's purposes in the world. Thus a foundational conviction regarding the Babylonian community as an elect and faithful remnant was already in existence before the fifth and the fourth centuries B.C.E." (Kessler 2009:143-144).

the gesture of reconciliation from other groups, as illustrated in Ezra 4. The reconstruction[233] process that took place in Yehud therefore, was guided by the principles of the law. The concept of "all Israel" is serving the interests of this law. In five instances the concept of "all Israel" is used to depict the exiles alone (Ezra 2:70, 8:25, 10:5; Neh. 2:72 [Eng.2:73]; 12:47). In two instances, the exiles alone are referred to as the twelve tribes (Ezra 6:17; 8:35). In one instance, the concept is used referring to the monarchic period (Neh.13:26). The discussion above proved that the concept of "all Israel" in Ezra-Nehemiah is used exclusively. The building of the temple is at the service of this law as well. In Ezra 4:1-3 the other Yahwists who want to help in the building of the temple are told: "You shall have no part with us in building a house to our God" (Ezra 4:3). In Nehemiah 13:4-9 again, the temple is used to serve the law. Nehemiah evicts Tobiah who had been allowed by the priest and he also had many friends among the Judean people. The temple also, has been proved to be used exclusively in Ezra-Nehemia

[133] Knoppers has a problem with the word reconstruction or restoration, for he argues that: "To cast the story of Ezra conservatively as one of restoration is, therefore misleading in some important respects. The writers of the Ezra story promote a set of behaviours that largely did not exist in the monarchy or, for that matter, in early postexilic times. The communal public readings and discussions of the Torah, the priestly and Levitical instruction of the laity in the Torah, and the public divorce and dispossession proceedings against those involved in mixed marriages are all cases in point. In the presentation of Ezra-Nehemiah, these phenomena appear as welcome developments, but they are also new developments" (2009:170-171).

Chapter Six

Identity Formation in Chronicles

1 Introduction

In her discussion of the ideology of Chronicles, Japhet (1997) refers to biblical axioms. An axiom is a statement that is accepted as true without further proof or argument. Describing the nature of Chronicles, Japhet (1997) avers that Chronicles anchors itself firmly in the biblical tradition and takes the essentials of biblical thought for granted, i.e., as axioms. According to Japhet (1997), these axioms include:

> The beliefs that there is one God, who created and rules the world, that God is present in His world, overseeing it by means of divine providence and judging it in divine justice, and that God maintains a special relationship with the people of Israel. Yet, the shared axioms of biblical faith are just that for the Chronicler: as axioms, they serve as points of departure for the creation of a particular world-view, a world-view that presents significant variations on the fundamental themes of religion – the nature of divine justice and providence, the relationship between Israel and its God or its land, and so on (1997:505).

Japhet's list does not exhaust the religious themes that concern the Chronicler's work. To the list of religious themes Japhet has outlined, the study adds the relationship between Israel and her neighbouring nations. What Japheth's statement means is that the Chronicler moves from the shared axioms of biblical faith to create a world-view that presents significant variations on the fundamental themes of religion. The relationship between Israel and other nations is one such religious theme. In a presentation of the overall argument of the work of the Chronicler, Johnstone (1997a) asserts that:

> C is a theological work: it is concerned with the universal relationship between God and humanity, and the vocation of Israel within that relationship. It begins with Adam, the father of humankind (1 Chron. 1:1), and ends with an edict by the gentile world emperor of the day in the name of the LORD as cosmic deity, who has given him 'all the kingdoms of the earth' (2 Chron. 36.23). In between it sketches the ideal form of the life of Israel, but also Israel's failure to attain that ideal, and the relations of Israel with the nations of the world (1997:10).

The relationship of Israel and other nations is of prime interest for this study. Particularly, it is the Chronicler's ethnic theology/ideology that the study is interested in. As it has already been stated, the hypothesis of this study argues that the book of Chronicles has an inclusive

ethnic theology/ideology. The objective of this chapter is to test this hypothesis. To achieve this objective, the study will follow a certain structure. Firstly, the contents of the book of Chronicles will be described. Secondly, the concept of "all Israel" will be examined. Thirdly, the presentation of the temple in connection with relations between the returned exiles and other groups will also be investigated. Fourthly, a comment on the overall discussion will be provided. Lastly, a conclusion will wrap up the discussion.

2 Contents of Chronicles

The total number of verses in the Chronicler's work is noted at the end of 2 Chronicles and the middle verse is 1 Chronicles 27:25a (Japhet 1993:2; Johnstone 1997:10). This study regards Chronicles as one unified work. The contents of the book of Chronicles are divided into three divisions in this discussion:

1. Introduction (1 Chr 1-9)
2. The United Kingdom (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 9)
3. The Southern Kingdom (2 Chr 10-2 Chr 36)

The presentation of the contents of Chronicles will be done under these headings.

2.1 Introduction (1 Chr 1-9)

First Chronicles 1-9 introduces the rest of the narrative (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 36). This introduction is presented primarily by means of lists of names and genealogies. "However, the Chronicler does not appear to have slavishly followed his sources. He feels free to add theologically motivated editorial comments (1 Chr 5:18-22, 25-26), as well as historically motivated editorial comments (1 Chr 4:27, 5:1-2)," Sparks notes (2008:167). Examples of lists of names are found in 1 Chronicles 1:1-4 and 24-27. Lists differ from genealogies because they do not imply a kinship relationship between the persons named while genealogies do (Wilson 1977:9-10; Sparks 2008:15). A genealogy is defined as "a written or oral expression of the descent of a person or persons from an ancestor or ancestors" (Wilson 1977:9).[134] Some genealogies are internal[135] while others are external[136] (Wilson 1977:10; Sparks 2008:14). There are two basic forms of genealogies: Segmented and linear genealogies. When a genealogy expresses more than one line of descent from a given ancestor, then it will exhibit

[134] See again our discussion above.
[135] 1 Chr 6:34-38: One person per generation.
[136] 1 Chr 8:30: Two people or more in one generation.

segmentation or branching: a segmented genealogy.[137] Each of its component lines or branches is called a segment. If a genealogy expresses only one line of descent from a given ancestor, then it will exhibit no segmentation and that is a linear genealogy (Wilson 1977:9; Thompson 1994:24;[138] Sparks 2008:16). Sparks (2008) demonstrates an example of a segmented genealogy in 1 Chronicles:

> First Chronicles 2-8 represents one, large, segmented genealogy with the common ancestor "Israel". It begins with the primary ancestor, Israel, and his twelve sons (1 Chr 2:1-2), and in the following chapters gives various details for most of these twelve sons. Each individual tribe is presented as just one segment of the larger, segmented, genealogy of Israel. Further, the Judahite genealogy (1 Chr 2:3-4:23), is itself a segment genealogy of the primary ancestor, Judah, as represented through his three sons, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (1 Chr 2:2-3) (2008:16).

Sparks (2008) continues to explain linear genealogies[139] as relating only one person to an ancestor and not to any other of his/her relations. A linear genealogy may present only one person per generation (1 Chr 2:36-41) or more than one person per generation (1 Chr 8:33, 35)[140] although it will trace the descendent of one of those persons presented and ignore the others (1 Chr 8:34, 36).[141] Further, linear genealogies may be descending[142] or ascending.[143] "Descending genealogies indicate that the last persons named are the rightful heirs and successors of the first person named, while the ascending genealogy seeks to legitimate the first named within his position because he can make a direct genealogical connection between himself and the last person named" (Sparks 2008:17). For this reason, genealogies can be another literary or oral device to project ideological feelings or thoughts. The study argues that from the genealogies in 1 Chronicles some theological/ideological expressions of the Chronicler can be deduced.

First Chronicles 1-9 can basically be divided into three broad sections, namely, the world before the rise of Israel (From Adam to Esau/Edom and Jacob/Israel: 1 Chr 1:1-2:2), pre-exilic Israel[144] (1 Chr 2:3-9:1) and postexilic Israel (1 Chr 9:2-44). According to Dyck (1998) these chapters are arranged, apart from chronology, according to status. "In the genealogies the issue is not only the identity of all Israel but also the centrality and legitimacy of Judah,

[137] They are also called horizontal or lateral genealogies (Knoppers 2004:247).
[138] Thompson also calls the segmented genealogies "mixed" genealogies.
[139] They are also called vertical genealogies (Knoppers 2004:248).
[140] There are four sons of Saul and four sons of Micah mentioned, respectively.
[141] Only the descendants of Jonathan and Ahaz are traced, respectively.
[142] It is tracing ancestry from parent to child.
[143] It is tracing ancestry from child to parent.
[144] Although this section is labelled preexilic, it ends with Judah being sent to exile in Babylon (1 Chr 9:1b).

Benjamin and Levi", argues Dyck (1998:128). Corroborating Dyck's argument of status, Sparks (2008) identifies the phrase עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה (until this day: 1 Chr 4:41, 43; 5:26) as recording the present status of the tribe(s) in question; speaking of the past cause of a present reality (2008:167)[145]. Having given a general overview of 1 Chronicles 1-9, the following discussion will break the chapters down to three sections, namely, 1 Chr 1:1-2:2, 1 Chr 2:3-9:1 and 1 Chr 9:2-44.

2.1.1 1 Chronicles 1:1-2:2

Describing 1 Chronicles 1:1-2:2 Klein (2006) says, "This is a history of all days, a universal history, beginning with Adam and extending to Israel" (2006:81). The first part, 1 Chronicles 1 starts with a list from Adam to Noah (1 Chr 1:1-4). With a segmentary genealogy, the Chronicler traces the descendants of Noah until Abraham (1 Chr 1:4-27). In a footnote, Dyck (1998) correctly notes that "it omits Gen. 4:17-22 (the sons of Cain); 22:20-24 (the sons of Nahor); and 19:37-38 (the offspring of Lot's daughters, namely Ammon and Moab)" (1998:128). From 1 Chronicles 1:28 another segmentary genealogy about Abraham's descendents follows (1 Chr 1:28-54). From 1 Chronicles 1:29-33 the Chronicler outlines the descendents of Ishmael, Abraham's eldest son. In verse 34 another son of Abraham, Isaac is mentioned with his two sons: Esau and Jacob. The remaining verses, 1 Chronicles 1:35-54, deal with the descendents of Esau (1 Chr 1:35-42), kings "of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites" (1 Chr 1:43-51a) and the clans of Edom (1 Chr 1:51b-54). Lastly, 1 Chronicles 2:1-2 deals with the descendents of Jacob. Both the descendents of Ishmael and Esau are described as Israel's closest rivals within Abraham's descendants (Dyck 1998:128). In an article, Assis (2006) explores "the rationale that stands behind the hostile attitude prevalent in biblical sources towards Edom" (2006:19). In his exploration of this hostility, Assis reasonably proposes that:

> Israel's attitude to Edom in the sixth century BCE is related to the people's feelings of despair, deriving from the belief that the destruction meant that God had abandoned his people. Since Edom was seen as an alternative to Israel, being identified with Esau, Jacob's brother, it was thought possible that God had now chosen Edom as his people in place of Israel. The Edomite participation in Judah's destruction and especially their settlement in the promised land in their place supported their impression that Edom has replaced Israel. The anti Edomite oracles were meant to instil into the hearts of the people that, despite the destruction, Israel is still the chosen people and the sins of Edom against Judah will not remain unpunished (2006:19).

[145] Although he later argues that the order of genealogies is not to be reduced to matters of geography or status of the various tribes within the postexilic community (2008:180).

Against this background, the lengthy genealogical excursus on Esau/Seir/Edom arouses curiosity in terms of its purpose in relation to the Chronicler's ethnic ideology. For instance, Knoppers (2004) asks, "Why would the writer magnify the position of Edom at a time in which Yehud was struggling to establish itself in the late Persian period? If Israel is the focal point of the Chronicler's interests, why mention the descendents of Esau at all?" (2004:287). One perspective sees the inclusion of a long Edomite genealogy as a way of cementing the relationship between Israel and Edom. Tebes (2006) discusses what he calls the construction of the Jacob-Esau tradition, giving this impression of cementing the relationship between Israel and Edom saying:

> The appearance of segmentary genealogical lists relating southern Jordanian and Negev groups might not be surprising given the proclivity to express politico-jural relationships between groups through the lenses of kinship-based segments. Thus, the Judaean population of the Negev adjusted their own genealogies to fit the new situation. Not only was Edom linked with Esau, but also a whole series of kinship links began to appear connecting secondary characters, e.g., between Edomite or Edomite-related lineages (especially descendants of Esau and Seir), and Judaean or Judaean related lineages (especially descendants of Caleb and Jerahmeel). In other words, the long segmentary genealogical lists of Genesis and Chronicles must be analyzed in the terms of their politico-jural function, which was to express the integration of the Jordanian newcomers into the nets of Judaean or Judaean-related peoples living in the Negev (2006:27).[146]

On the other hand, Mitchell (2010) gives a different impression from that of Tebes, arguing that the genre of historiography requires the construction of the Other. She further argues that perhaps, the narrowing of the focus from all humanity down to Israel in 1 Chronicles 1 might show Israel as being constructed against the Other of all nations (2010:103). This argument is based on Mitchell's (2006) thesis that "Otherness was an integral part of the construction of the genre of historiography in the ancient world in the Persian and Hellenistic periods" (2006:94). This statement is interpreted in this study as meaning that historiography serves identity formation, whereby identity is established by separation from the other while the other is also portrayed negatively. Basing her judgement on this thesis, Mitchell perceives the genealogy of Edom in 1 Chronicles 1:35-54 as follows:

> Given the largely negative way that Edom is seen in other biblical texts and that Edom is not, in fact, Israel, it might be a possibility to read the genealogy as an Othering move. The note introducing the list of kings indicates that these kings ruled "before a king ruled over the Israelites" (1 Chron. 1:43). In

[146] Tebes does however at the end indicate that although this genealogy is a way of cementing the relationship between Israel and Edom, "it doubtlessly served a larger purpose of legitimizing the domination of the Judaean state over the entire Negev region" (2006:29).

> some ways, this brings to mind the antiquity of Egypt as compared with Greece for Herodotus. Yet the period of the kings devolved into a period of chieftains who are not even named individually. Edom is therefore constructed as the opposite of Israel, the Other ... this genealogy is constructed as an anti-Edomite genealogy rather than one merely showing Edom's relationship to Israel (2010:105-106).

In trying to handle this diversity of opinions, the study does not treat the case of Edom in isolation from the other nations mentioned in 1 Chronicles 1:1-2:2. The study is more comfortable with Dyck's (1998) observation. He argues that the genealogy is segmentary, indicating who the other nations were at the point of Israel's emergence as a nation, and linear, tracing a direct line from Adam to Abraham to Israel (1998:129). Knoppers (2004) echoes this sentiment, taking it a bit further by saying:

> Israel may be the focus of the Chronicler's presentation, but his *imago mundi*[147] also presents Israel as very much related to the other nations, which preceded Israel or developed alongside it. The descendants of Israel will be singled out for exclusive attention, but these descendants live within a community of nations of which they are but one part ... If on one level the presentation moves diachronically, situating the appearance of Israel against the background of other peoples, on a second level, the presentation moves laterally, situating Israel spatially within the world it inhabits. The segmented genealogies of Japhet, Ham, Shem, Esau and Seir illustrate the author's acknowledgement that a great diversity of peoples in a great diversity of places inhabit his world. The nations may be linguistically, geographically, and ethnically dispersed, but they share a common humanity and a common progenitor (2004:294).

Concerning the issue raised earlier about the lengthy genealogical excursus on Esau/Seir/Edom arousing curiosity in terms of its purpose in relation to the Chronicler's ethnic ideology, the study takes a cue from the foregoing contribution by Knoppers. Knoppers mentioned two things that are very important for this study with regard to the Chronicler's ethnic theology/ideology. The first one is that Israel is very much related to the other nations. The second one is that the nations may be linguistically, geographically, and ethnically dispersed, but they share a common humanity and a common progenitor. These two assertions signify an identity that acknowledges both the differences and similarities with the other. Such social categorisation can be described as emphasising crossed categorisation.[148] The Chronicler's ethnic theology/ideology can therefore be classified as rather more inclusive than exclusive. This is contrary to Mitchell's argument that Otherness as the foundational step of historiography informs the Chronicler's genealogy. The statement introducing the Edomite kings, "before a king ruled over the Israelites" (1 Chron. 1:43), is

[147] Image of the world.
[148] For further information on crossed categorisation see chapter two.

interpreted by Mitchell as derogatory, undermining the reputation of Edom (2010:105). However, Johnstone (1997a) retrieves a different meaning from the comment. According to Johnstone, the statement appreciates the fact that Israel was preferred despite advanced development and maturity of Edom vis-à-vis Israel (1997a:34).

2.1.2 1 Chronicles 2:3-9:1

These are the genealogies of the twelve sons of Jacob. They occupy seven of the nine chapters of this introduction. They are outlined below:

1 Chronicles 2:3-4:23: Genealogy of Judah, house of David and Judah again;

1 Chronicles 4:24-43: Descendants of Simeon;

1 Chronicles 5:1-26: The Transjordanian Tribes;

- 3-10: Rueben (1-2 report Rueben's loss of birthright);
- 11-17: Gad (18-22 Rueben, Gad and East Manasseh in coalition for war);
- 23-24: Joseph: half-tribe of East Manasseh (25-26 Assyrian exile);

1 Chronicles 6:1-66: Levitical genealogies and settlements;

1 Chronicles 7:1-40: Other tribes of Israel;

- 1-5: Issachar;
- 6-11: Benjamin (I);
- 12-13: Dan and Naphtali;[149]
- 14-19: Joseph's son Manasseh;
- 20-29: Joseph's son Ephraim;
- 30-40: Asher;

1 Chronicles 8:1-40: Benjamin (II).[150]

[149] Verse 12 is understood differently by different scholars. Johnstone (1997a) understands the verse under Benjamin while Knoppers (2004) under Dan. Japhet (1993) describes verse 12 as corrupted. Because the verse has no introduction, it appears as a continuation of the Benjaminite section. "'Shupim and Hupim' are just vocal variants of 'Shupham and Hupham', sons of Benjamin according to Num. 26.36" (Japhet 1993:174). This makes it easy to see it as continuation of the Benjaminite genealogy. However, this interpretation contrasts with the systematic and comprehensive format of the Benjamin passage as a whole. The passage presents three sons of Benjamin and their respective offspring and relevant concluding remarks, argues Japhet. Also, the phrase "the sons of Bilhah" implies that verses 12 and 13 originally referred to Naphtali and Bilhah's first son, Dan, continues Japhet. The study does not find it far-fetched to combine Dan and Naphtali, for they are both Bilhah's sons. For further discussion on this issue, see Japhet (1993:174).

[150] The genealogy of Benjamin is repeated.

Dyck (1998) compares these genealogies with the genealogies in the Chronicler's source, Genesis 35:23-26. He observes that in Genesis 35:23-26, Jacob's sons are listed according to their mothers, with only Dan's position changed. In Chronicles, on the other hand, they are not ordered "naturally", according to mother or birthright, but according to status, namely, the priority of Judah and the centrality of Levi. In a complementary ordering principle of geography, the prominence of Judah and Jerusalem is underlined too. In this complementary geographical ordering, the Chronicler starts at the *centre* with Judah and moves southwards to Simeon, Judah's close relation. In an anticlockwise movement, he moves east into the Transjordan,[151] northwards,[152] westwards,[153] returning southwards[154] and back to the *centre* again, namely, Benjamin (Dyck 1998:129-131). This is a concentric movement with Judah and Benjamin being the centre.[155] This movement starts from Judah, the centre and ends at Benjamin, another centre. This centrality of Judah and Benjamin is argued by Sparks (2008) as well. According to Sparks, the whole of 1 Chronicles 1-9 is structured chiastically. The genealogies of Judah and Benjamin are at the same chiastic level as level D and level D^1 respectively. He also identifies some similarities between the two genealogies, e.g., they contain familial terms, they refer to their community leaders, they contain foreign elements, and have long lists for the royals, David and Saul. Levi has not yet been included because Levi's location underpins the Chronicler's ethnic theology/ideology. The Levites reside in all the regions of the other tribes of Israel. Dyck (1998) describes Levi's distribution as follows:

> The second part (6:50-81) is of particular interest because, in listing the Levitical cities according to the tribes in which they are located, the Chronicler has interwoven an "all Israel" inclusivism and an emphasis on the centrality of Levi. Temple (or temple personnel), people, and land are inseparable, held together by the tribe which does not have land like the others but which is nevertheless "settled" (6:54) throughout the tribes in their cities with their pastures (1998:130-131).

In this discussion Dyck makes a pivotal link for this study. He links an "all Israel" inclusivism to the temple. The Levites, as custodians of the Israelite cult, are spread throughout the lands of the other Israelite tribes and thereby act as a unifying force among all the Israelite tribes. The Levites, who are also part of the temple personnel, link the concept of "all Israel" and the temple. In conclusion, the Chronicler, in these genealogies, presents "all Israel" as the twelve tribes, led by Judah politically, through the house of David in Jerusalem,

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[151] Rueben.
[152] Gad and East Manasseh.
[153] Issachar, [Dan], Naphtali.
[154] Ephraim and West Manasseh.
[155] This brings in mind the priority given to Judah and Benjamin in Ezra-Nehemiah.

with Benjamin alongside Judah as another central tribe[156] while, according to Johnstone (1997a), the presence of the Levites in the midst of the people is to enable Israel to live the life of holiness that expresses the ideal harmony in the relationship between God and humanity (1997a:12-13).[157]

2.1.3 1 Chronicles 9:2-44

Japhet (1993) describes 1 Chronicles 9 as serving a double role: "[I]t brings to a conclusion the comprehensive introduction to Chronicles, and at the same time introduces the subsequent pericopes" (1993:202). Referring to 1 Chronicles 9:1 Klein (2006) says: "This verse sums up the preceding seven chapters dealing with the genealogies of Israel" (2006:265; cf. also Knoppers 2004:486). Knoppers further argues that 1 Chronicles 9:1a forms an *inclusio* with the introduction to the sons of Jacob in 1 Chronicles 2:1 (2004:486). 1 Chronicles 9:1b reports that Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their unfaithfulness, which brings the genealogical records to an end with the Babylonian exile.

1 Chronicles 9:2 resumes with the people's return to the land and also introduces the subsequent pericopes. Concerning 9:3-34 Sparks (2008) observes that this section is demarcated by the phrase, "they dwelt in Jerusalem" (וּבִירוּשָׁלַ͏ִם יָשְׁבוּ; 1 Chr 9:3), or (יָשְׁבוּ בִּירוּשָׁלָ͏ִם; 1 Chr 9:34). "This phrase acts like an *inclusio* around the entire list, and seeks to emphasise that all those incorporated by it (Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, priests, Levites and gatekeepers) dwelt in Jerusalem. This is shown to be the rightful dwelling place not just of some, but of 'all Israel'",[158] so argues Sparks (2008: 351; cf. also Knoppers 2004:501; Japhet 1993:208). 1 Chronicles 9:35-44 is a passage parallel to 1 Chronicles 8:29-38 and is a preliminary introduction to 1 Chronicles 10 (Japhet 1993:218). According to Japhet (1993) the end of the list in 1 Chronicles 9:35-44 is abridged so that it ends differently from its parallel and that might be an indication that it serves a different motive, namely, to concentrate on the genealogical portrait of the house of Saul. Japhet (1993) further argues that "moreover, looking at the passage from a different perspective, a genealogy of the Saulides is a very appropriate introduction to ch. 10, where the narrative begins with the death of Saul and his sons" (1993:205). A befitting summary of the introduction is provided by Knoppers (2004) when he compares 1 Chronicles 1-9 and 1 Chronicles 10-2 Chronicles

[156] The centrality of Judah, Benjamin and the Levites brings into mind Ezra 1:5.
[157] Sparks (2008) dedicated nearly 400 pages trying to demonstrate the centrality of the cult in 1 Chronicles 1-9.
[158] Klein (2006) observes that "Ephraim and Manasseh" is a kind of shorthand for all the northern tribes in Chronicles and also that "northerners often participate in the religious life of Jerusalem in Chronicles (2 Chr 30:1, 10, 11, 18 & 34:9) and the Chronicler in general seems to invite all Israel to participate in the temple worship at Jerusalem" (2006:267) (cf. also 2 Chr 31:1).

36, highlighting the theological/ideological significance of Jerusalem and other themes. He says:

> Living within foreign lands is more of an interlude to one's return home than privileged as a normal way of life. In the context of the Persian and early Hellenistic age, those who call themselves Israelites may find themselves scattered in different places, but even so, Jerusalem is indispensable to their identity and future hopes as a people. In this respect, the genealogical prologue (1 Chr 1-9) and the history of the monarchy (1 Chr 10 – 2 Chr 36), despite their different genres, reveal similar points of view. Both end with exile (1 Chr 9:1; 2 Chr 36:17-21), charge the deportation to infidelity (1 Chr 9:1; 2 Chr 36:12-16), and announce a return (1 Chr 9:2-34; 2 Chr 36:22-23) (2004:487).

2.2 The United Kingdom (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 9)

The introduction (1 Chronicles 1-9) to the historical narrative (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 9) of the Chronicler set the tone for the subsequent narrative. It placed Israel on an "international" stage by presenting the rise of Israel in the midst of other nations. By doing that, the Chronicler asserted that there is one God, Who created and rules the world and He maintains a special relationship with the people of Israel. The twelve sons of Jacob comprise Israel. Through the wars that were won when trust is put in God and lost when unfaithfulness to God set in, the Chronicler demonstrated that God is present in His world, overseeing it by means of divine providence and judging it in divine justice (e.g. 1 Chr 5:20 and 1 Chr 5:25-26, respectively). In the centre of Israel, the Chronicler put the cult, through the Levites. The tribe of Judah was presented as the political leader of the other tribes through the house of David.

1 Chronicles 10, in only fourteen verses, presents the story of Saul, who died because he was unfaithful to the Lord and the handing over of the kingdom to David by the Lord. For the next nineteen chapters, it is about David. 1 Chronicles 11-12 portrays the entrenchment of David's rule over the whole of Israel. In Chronicles, David's ascendancy to power was without struggle, unlike in II Samuel, just smooth and the whole of Israel made him their king at Hebron. David, with all Israel, moved into the city of the Jebusites, Jerusalem, and captured the city. Commenting on the capture of Jerusalem, Williamson (2004) says: "His [the Chronicler's] purpose in this case may well have been to develop his ideal portrayal, already begun in 11:1-3, of a united Israel centred by David on Jerusalem" (2004:118). Immediately, David demonstrated the characteristics of an ideal king. He became concerned

about the Ark of the Covenant which Saul ignored for twenty years (1 Chr 13:3).[159] More importantly, David planned this important event in a paradigmatic manner: He will do it if it is good with the whole assembly, if it is the will of God, a word should be sent throughout the territories of Israel and to the priests and the Levites who are in their towns (1 Chr 13:2). When they fetched the ark, Uzzah, one of the two men who guided the ark, tried to steady it and the Lord struck him dead. It therefore became clear that the Levites are the ones appointed to guide the ark (1 Chr 15:2). With the help of Hiram king of Tyre, David built his palace (1 Chr 14:1). In consultation with the Lord, David defeated the Philistines two times. "So David's fame spread throughout every land, and the Lord made all the nations fear him" (1 Chr 14:17). In the introduction the rise of Israel was set in an "international" context, now David put Israel on the highest spot in the "international community" due to his faithfulness to the Lord. After David had constructed buildings for himself in the City of David, he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it. Then David said, "No one but the Levites may carry the ark of God, because the Lord chose them to carry the ark of the Lord and to minister before him forever" (1 Chr15:1-2). The ark was fetched and installed in Jerusalem (1 Chr 16). The next big step David took was to propose building the temple although the Lord chose instead his offspring to build the temple. However, the Lord cut a covenant with David, promising that He will subdue David's enemies and the kingdom of Israel will remain in the house of David forever (1 Chr 17). In 1 Chronicles 18-20 the Lord fulfilled His promise to subdue David's enemies. David subdued the Philistines, Gath and its surrounding villages from the control of the Philistines, Moabites, Euphrates River, Arameans, Edom, Moab, the Ammonites and Amalek (1 Chr 18-20). The kingdom of Israel was extended. The land, a primary economic resource, became a reward for faithfulness to the Lord. A significant event took place in 1 Chronicles 21. The chapter starts negatively but ends at a positive note. David capitulated to Satan's (שָׂטָן) temptation and conducted a census.

God was offended by the census and sent a plague that killed the Israelites. David repented and the plague stopped at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. David then purchased the threshing floor of Ornan, according to the commandment of the Lord (1 Chr 21:19). He made a burnt offering at that threshing floor where he called upon the Lord, and the Lord answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering (1 Chr 21:26). On that spot is where the temple would stand (1 Chr 22:1). David identified the site of the temple. Williamson (2004) describes the scenario as follows:

[159] The Ark of the Covenant had been captured by the Philistines but they returned it because it killed the Philistines and made some sick.

> First, the closing verses of the passage (21:26-22:1) are his own addition and, as is his customary method, they provide us with his interpretation of the foregoing narrative. Here we find that he aims to establish the divinely willed continuity between the Mosaic sanctuary and the future Jerusalem temple. The acceptance of the burnt offering by fire from heaven not only confirms the choice of the present site, but establishes a link with the altar of the tabernacle (cf. Lev. 9:24) and points forward to the similar occurrence at the dedication of the temple (2 Chron. 7:1) (2004:154).

David then began to prepare for the building of the future temple (1 Chr 22). He invited the aliens who resided in the land of Israel (1 Chr 22:2) and allowed Sidonians and Tyrians (1 Chr 22:4) to participate in the building of the Jerusalem temple.[160] He charged Solomon with the building of the temple. He prepared for the future temple and the worship in it by charging Solomon and the leaders to continue the work (1Chr 22), and by making Solomon king (1 Chr 23:1), and organizing the Levites (1 Chr 23), priests (1 Chr 24), singers (1 Chr 25), gatekeepers (1 Chr 26), as well as the officers of the people (1 Chr 27). Johnstone (1997a) summarises this section as follows:

> 1 Chronicles 23-27 have defined the agencies organized by David through which the system of holiness is to be put in place whereby Israel may attain its destiny as the host on earth of the Lord of hosts (1997a:274).

The two last chapters of 1 Chronicles, 1 Chronicles 28 and 29, conclude the reign of David. David orientated the people for the new era of Solomon's reign. Solomon is announced as the successor to the Davidic throne. The plan of the temple is handed over to Solomon. The period that David "reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem" (1 Chr 29:27). This section can be wrapped up in Miller and Hayes' (2006) words:

> Perhaps the most characteristic feature of the Chronicler's presentation of David is that he credits David with being the real organiser of the temple cult, its staff, and especially of the Levitical functionaries associated with the temple and the ark (1 Chr. 15-16; 23-26). Indeed, the Chronicler would have us suppose that David planned the entire construction of the temple and passed along the plans and provisions to Solomon (1 Chr. 28-29) ... The transition to Solomon's rule is made under David's supervision and without incident (1 Chr 23:1; 29:22). In short, the Chronicler presents us with a highly idealized David who was a great warrior, who was the founder of the temple with its associated religious orders and institutions, and whose reign was virtually free of internal conflicts from beginning to end (2006:158).

[160] This is contrary to Ezra-Nehemiah where the so-called foreigners were rejected for participation in the rebuilding of the temple.

Williamson (2004) suggests that "the Chronicler modelled the transition of rule from David to Solomon on that from Moses to Joshua at the end of Deuteronomy and the beginning of Joshua" (2004:140). Solomon took the reigns and summoned all Israel and with the whole assembly, went to the high place that was at Gibeon. While there, the Lord told him to ask for whatever he wanted to ask for. He asked for wisdom to rule the great nation the Lord gave him. The Lord gave him wisdom and additionally, riches and honour (2 Chr 1). From 2 Chr 2-7, the narrative is about the temple. The remaining chapters, 2 Chronicles 8-9, present the fame of Solomon as the greatest king. Johnstone (1997a) summarizes these chapters as follows:

> The fundamental purpose of Solomon's reign – the inauguration of Temple worship – has been achieved. The account of the remainder of his reign records the benefits that flow from this expression of duty totally fulfilled towards God. These benefits are universal recognition, the establishment of harmonious relations with the neighbouring states, and the growth of trade, leading to unparalleled prosperity within Israel. The visit of the Queen of Sheba, attracted by Solomon's fame and the wisdom acknowledged to underwrite that prosperity, is the signal event of the second half of the reign (1997a:361).

Japhet (1997) identifies a contradiction in the presentation of the Solomon narrative. On the one hand, many other matters are omitted to emphasize Solomon's principal function as the temple builder. On the other hand, much of this emphasized principal function of Solomon is attributed to David (e.g., the finding of the site and the preparations of the construction) (1997:488). Discussing the modelling of the transition of rule from David to Solomon on that from Moses to Joshua, Williamson (2004) argues that this serves two related purposes. The first one is that he welded together the reigns of David and Solomon so that they are presented as a single, unified "event" in the history of the Chronicler's people. The second one is that it demonstrates that Solomon's function was to bring to fulfilment the work begun by David. However, this does not render David's work incomplete or Solomon's incapacity without David (2004:146). Lastly, Miller and Hayes' (2006) perception is as follows: "The Chronicler's treatment of Solomon (2 Chr 1-9) follows the same pattern as his treatment of David ... Most of the Chronicler's elaboration of the ceremonies, however, has to do with the various orders of Levites who are depicted fulfilling the cultic functions that, according to the Chronicler, David had assigned them" (2006:195-196).

2.3 The Southern Kingdom (2 Chr 10-2 Chr 36)

When Solomon died, he was succeeded by his son, Rehoboam. During the reign of Rehoboam, the kingdom split into two. Ten tribes broke away from Rehoboam so that he was left with two tribes: Judah and Benjamin (2 Chr 10). The ten tribes formed the Northern Kingdom of Israel and Judah and Benjamin formed the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The rest of the narrative deals with the Southern Kingdom of Judah and her kings. According to Johnstone (1997b), through David and Solomon, the ideal has been achieved: the kings of the earth pay their homage (1 Chr 29:30; 2 Chr 9:22-24) (1997b:9). Johnstone continues to argue that the account in 1 Chronicles 11-2 Chronicles 9 of the reigns of David and Solomon may be regarded as the casting into narrative form of the aspirations of the Jerusalemite theology. The fulfilment of hopes is portrayed through them in most ideal terms possible (1997b:10). The accounts of the subsequent reigns to David and Solomon are evaluated according to standards that were maintained by David and Solomon in terms of the cult.

In the history of Judah recounted by the Chronicler in 2 Chronicles 10-36, one of the most pervasive themes is the sin of idolatry, which results in the related theme of reward and punishment; also called the doctrine of retribution. Idolatry "is responsible for military defeats, the death of kings, and, ultimately, the destruction of the Temple" (Japhet 1997:215; cf. also Kelly 1996:115). Conversely, faithfulness to YHWH resulted in "divine reward in the form of buildings, army organization, military victory, progeny, wealth and tribute" (Kelly 1996:115). Japhet (1997) relates the Chronicler's description of idolatry clearly by comparing it with Kings' description of idolatry, saying:

> The account in Kings, which accords with the historical reality, assumes that there was never any interruption in Temple worship, and only Manasseh's reign may have posed a threat to this continuity. However, in the Chronistic, perhaps "historically impossible", view, pagan ritual had a direct adverse effect on the worship of God, to the extent that the Temple was closed and YHWH worship abolished. This principle of exclusivity, which governs the entire concept of divine worship, operates in two directions. Just as one cannot worship YHWH and recognize other gods, so too, it is impossible to serve other gods and still worship YHWH (1997:216).

Generally, although the narrative revolves around the Davidic monarchy, it is justifiable to describe the narrative as more a religious story than a political story. Another interesting comparison between Kings and Chronicles is how the two sources assess differently the reigns of the same kings. In Kings there are strictly good or bad kings while in Chronicles a good king might end up being bad while a bad king might end up bad. "Even Hezekiah and

Josiah, Judah's most righteous monarchs, have their moments of sin" (Japhet 1997:491). This story, in a nutshell, is a theological evaluation of each king's reign until the temple was destroyed by Babylon. However, unlike the book of Kings, the book of Chronicles does not end tragically but with hope. Chronicles is more positive than Kings. It tells of apostasy but offers hope in spite of tragedy. This is understandable when one takes note of the fact that despite the fact that the story tells of apostasy, the author writes in a different context of a liberated Judah. In 2 Chronicles 36 the Persian king, Cyrus, allows the exiles to return home.

Lastly, although this discussion focused only on idolatry and the doctrine of retribution, there are many religious themes that are intertwined in the book of Chronicles. For this reason, this study takes cue from Williamson's (1982) wise approach to the Chronicler's theology. In an introduction to a discussion of some characteristic themes of Chronicles, Williamson (1982) eloquently avers as follows:

> Writing in the later part of the OT period, the Chronicler is heir to most of the traditions which flow through the main stream of OT thought. Since it is not his purpose to make a systematic presentation of all that has gone before, there is much which he can therefore take for granted, in both the realms of antecedent history and of thought. It is thus more appropriate here to highlight a few of his most characteristic themes than to attempt an overall appraisal of his 'theology' (Williamson 1982:24).

In line with Williamson's approach, the study cannot attempt an overall appraisal of the Chronicler's theology. Instead, for the main discussion of this chapter, this study will highlight two more characteristic themes in Chronicles, namely, the concept of "all Israel" and the temple. The next two discussion topics will investigate whether the concept of "all Israel" on the one hand, and the temple, on the other, were used inclusively or exclusively by the Chronicler.

3 All Israel (כל-עשׂראל)

Johnson (1988) raises an interesting point, namely the relationship between the prologue (1 Chronicles 1-9) and the subsequent narrative (1 Chronicles 10-2 Chronicles 36) in Chronicles. He agreeably establishes the relationship as seemingly ambivalent at first glance while at several points there seems to be a close relationship – possibly a literary interdependence – between the two sections. He considers 1 Chronicles 1-9 as an integral part of the Chronicler's work. The assumption of this consideration is that some of the characteristic ideas and themes in the narrative section would be reflected in the genealogical prologue (1988:44-47). As a consequence of this assumption, he undertakes to compare the

two sections to identify the reflection of characteristic ideas and themes in both sections. Having observed that there is, both implicitly and explicitly, a concern for all twelve tribes in the narrative section, he concludes that, "in general it appears that the same overall view of the relation between north and south does indeed prevail in I. 1-9, where, after the opening introductory chapter, the author gives a genealogical sketch of 'all Israel'" (1988:47-50). It is particularly this specific motif of "all Israel" that is of specific interest to this chapter. This section of the chapter is going to deal specifically with this motif to establish whether Chronicles is ethnically exclusive or inclusive. Describing the prevalence of this motif in the narrative section, Johnson (1988) says:

> In the narrative section there is, both implicitly and explicitly, a concern for all twelve tribes of Israel. A favorite phrase of the Chronicler is 'all Israel', apparently used to designate the whole people of God, the twelve tribes, rather than the tribes of the southern kingdom or northern kingdom only. This phrase לארשי־לכ occurs thirty-four times absolutely and about half so frequently in construct forms such as 'all the elders of Israel', 'all the congregations of Israel', 'all the tribes of Israel', 'all lands of Israel', 'all princes of Israel', 'every man of Israel', 'all thy people Israel', 'all who were in Israel', 'all the kings of Israel'. That this term had a special significance for the Chronicler is indicated by the fact that it occurs almost as frequently in the chapters dealing with the divided monarchy and even after the fall of the northern kingdom as it does in the chapters recounting the history of the monarchy (1988:47-49).

The study fully agrees with Johnson that the concept of "all Israel", indeed, had a special significance for the Chronicler. This concept occurs forty-six[161] times in Chronicles and appears in passages transferred verbatim from Samuel-Kings, sometimes with changes, minor or major, and in the Chronicler's own work, his *Sondergut*[162] (cf. also Howard Jr 1993:255; Japhet 1997:271-272). Below is a table that demonstrates this categorisation:

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[161] According to Johnson (1988) it occurs thirty-four times (1988:47) and according to Howard Jr (1993) it occurs forty times (1993:255) while according to Japhet (1997) it occurs forty-four times (1997:271-276). As Howard Jr explains, the additional references are to occurrences of the "phrase" Israel with an additional Hebrew particle attached to the word (*'et-kol-yiśrā'ēl or běkol- yiśrā'ēl or lěkol- yiśrā'ēl*) (1988:255). Also additional are prepositions: e.g., עִם־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל and עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל .

[162] By *Sondergut*, in this study, we refer to huge passages or smaller units that do not appear in the Deuteronomistic source but was inserted by the Chronicler in his use of the Deuteronomistic material. This categorisation is also extended to sentences that have been modified so that they change their Deuteronomistic theological outlook and adopt a new Chronistic theological outlook. This extension gets encouragement from Williamson's stance on whether all parallel passages must be ignored. Responding to von Rad's suggestion that the parallel passages must be ignored, Williamson says: "We cannot accept that all parallel passages must be ignored, for if, as von Rad does, we find significance in the small changes that the Chronicler introduces, then it

ought to be equally significant that he leaves other passages unchanged" (1977:88).

Number	Verbatim		Major/minor Changes[163]		Sondergut
	Source	Chronicles	Source	Chronicles	Chronicles
1	2 Sam 8:15	1 Chr 18:14	2 Sam 5:1	1 Chr 11:1	1 Chr 9:1
2	2 Sam 10:17	1 Chr 19:17	2 Sam 5:6	1 Chr 11:4	1 Chr 11:10
3	1 Kings 8:65	2 Chr 7:8	2 Sam 6:2	1 Chr 13:6	1 Chr 12:39 Eng 38
4	1 Kings 11:42	2 Chr 9:30	2 Sam 6:5	1 Chr 13:8	1 Chr 13:5[164]
5	1 Kings 12:1	2 Chr 10:1	2 Sam 5:17	1 Chr 14:8	1 Chr 15:3
6	1 Kings 12:16	2 Chr 10:16a	2 Sam 6:15	1 Chr 15:28	1 Chr 28:4
7	1 Kings 22:17	2 Chr 18:16	2 Sam 7:7	1 Chr 17:6	1 Chr 28:8
8			2 Sam 24:8	1 Chr 21:4	1 Chr 29:21
9			2 Sam 24:9	1 Chr 21:5	1 Chr 29:23
10			1 Kings 12:3	2 Chr 10:3	1 Chr 29:25
11			1 Kings 12:16	2 Chr 10:16b	1 Chr 29:26
12			1 Kings 12:23	2 Chr 11:3	2 Chr 1:2a
13					2 Chr 1:2b
14					2 Chr 7:6
15					2 Chr11:13
16					2 Chr 12:1
17					2 Chr 13:4
18					2 Chr 13:15
19					2 Chr 24:5[165]
20					2 Chr 28:23
21					2 Chr 29:24a
22					2 Chr 29:24b
23					2 Chr 30:1
24					2 Chr 30:5
25					2 Chr 30:6
26					2 Chr 31:1
27					2 Chr 35:3

Table 1: "All Israel" in Kings and Chronicles

The above table reveals different uses of the concept of "all Israel" by the Chronicler. In seven instances he uses the concept in a phrase that appears in exactly the same manner in his source. In other words, it is transferred verbatim. "In twelve cases the Chronicler, in using the phrase 'all Israel', changes his underlying source slightly. The underlying phrase usually is something such as 'Israel' or 'all the tribes of Israel', which the Chronicler has changed to the more standardized 'all Israel'" (Howard 1993:256). In twenty-seven instances he uses the

[163] Some of these passages do not constitute any real deviation from the sources; they merely amplify their intended meaning or reflect stylistic considerations. However, in a number of them, the addition of "all Israel" produces an extra emphasis not found in the sources (Japhet 1993:272). Unlike Japhet, the minor changes are combined with major changes and not with verbatim. Since the focus is on the *Sondergut*, this combination is not supposed to cause problems.

[164] Howard categorises this verse under changes while Japhet classifies it as *Sondergut*.

[165] Japhet mistakenly mentions it as 2 Chr 24:8

concept on his own. The material is either the Chronicler's original passages or just small insertions of verses or passages in the source material and the concept is found therein. This latter category is referred to as the *Sondergut*. The verses transferred verbatim will not be discussed. For the purpose of this chapter, the focus is on the *Sondergut*. Before we get into the discussion, it is important to highlight that the meaning of this concept of "all Israel" in Chronicles is not a rigid one. Expressing the "semantic range" of the concept, Japhet (1997) writes:

> At times, "all Israel" expands the account to include the entire people with all its tribes and components. Nevertheless, the phrase's semantic range remains broad and may also be used to designate the northern kingdom alone or the southern kingdom alone. We even find this broad range of meaning within one context (1997:277-278).

Japhet (1997) further comments that "the use of 'all Israel' and not just Israel to indicate the northern kingdom shows that the expression was used flexibly, depending on the context" (1997:276). From the verses classified as *Sondergut* in the table above, another table is formed which indicates some verses which show the semantic range Japhet is referring to:

Sondergut			
Number	Twelve Tribes	Northern Kingdom	Southern Kingdom
1	1 Chr 9:1	2 Chr11:13	2 Chr 12:1
2	1 Chr 11:10	2 Chr 13:4	2 Chr 24:5
3	1 Chr 12:39[Eng 38]	2 Chr 13:15	2 Chr 28:23
4	1 Chr 13:5	2 Chr 30:1	
5	1 Chr 15:3	2 Chr 30:6	
6	1 Chr 28:4	2 Chr 31:1	
7	1 Chr 28:8		
8	1 Chr 29:21		
9	1 Chr 29:23		
10	1 Chr 29:25		
11	1 Chr 29:26		
12	2 Chr 1:2a		
13	2 Chr 1:2b		
14	2 Chr 7:6		
15	2 Chr 29:24a		
16	2 Chr 29:24b		
17	2 Chr 30:5		
18	2 Chr 35:3		

Table 2: "All Israel" in Chronicles

As the two tables above indicate, the use of the concept "all Israel" has been divided into two groups: according to whether it is verbatim, changed or *Sondergut* and according to whether

it refers to the twelve tribes, northern kingdom or southern kingdom. In other words, they are divided according to origin and semantic range. The discussion moves further now to examine the second division of the use of the concept of "all Israel". The use of the concept in reference to the twelve tribes, the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom, i.e., its semantic range, should be investigated. Only the semantic range of the *Sondergut* will be considered.

3.1 Twelve-Tribe Theme

The twelve-tribe theme in Chronicles is presented as a socio-political reality on the one hand and as an ideal that formed the basis of the Chronicler's vision of a restored Israel on the other. The references to "all Israel" in the first part of the narrative (1 Chr 10 – 2 Chr 9) appear in a narrative that depicts the united kingdom of David and Solomon. During this period the twelve tribes' existence was real and thus a socio-political reality. However, in the second part of the narrative (2 Chr 11 – 2 Chr 36), the united kingdom did not exist anymore, the kingdoms were separated but the sense of a twelve-tribe existence is maintained. This portrayal one can sense in 2 Chronicles 30:1-12. Williamson (1982) describes this section as follows:

> The preparations for the celebration of the Passover are primarily concerned with the gathering to Jerusalem of representatives of the whole of Israel (1982:365).

The twelve-tribe sense is maintained even after the northern kingdom disappeared (cf. 2 Chr 35:18). At this point, the twelve tribes are more an ideal than a reality. To crown it all, in 1 Chronicles 9:2-3 the twelve-tribe perception is evident even though the reference is to the postexilic community, and the land did not belong to "Israel". This persistent maintenance of the twelve-tribe perception in spite of the changed socio-political context is a sign of the strong religious conviction of the Chronicler to envision the twelve tribes as a unity, and the use of the concept of "all Israel" is founded on this perception. The above argument is very well encapsulated in Japhet's (1993) description of this scenario when she articulates it as follows:

> The Chronicler has a very special picture of the people of Israel in its ethnographic, geographical and political aspects. His dominant view is that of 'great Israel' in the broadest sense, applying to both its ethnographic definition and geographical expansion. The people of Israel are conceived of as a comprehensive, unified body comprised of tribes, which in turn are vital and active entities throughout the history of Israel. Not only in the nine introductory chapters, when 'Israel' is introduced, and in the reigns of David and Solomon when Israel achieved its ideal existence, but also after the defection of

> the northern tribes, there is a process of return to this original unity, which culminates in the days of Josiah … (1993:46).

3.2 Divided Monarchy

As it has just been argued above, after the division of the monarchy, one still finds the phrase "all Israel" in the Chronicler's work. This part of the discussion will look at how this phrase is used in these circumstances. Particularly, the aim is to investigate whether this phrase is used exclusively, as some scholars argue. Tuell (2001), for example, argues that "as 11:3[166] suggests, while the Chronicler may follow convention and refer to the northern kingdom as 'Israel', the *true* Israel is now Judah and Benjamin" (2001:159; cf. also 158).[167]

3.2.1 Southern Kingdom

Williamson (1977) asserts that "the author of the books of Chronicles lived during a period in which one of the major issues for the Jewish people was the precise definition of the extent of its own community" (1977:1). Studies of the Chronicler's work in this regard have reached different conclusions. In Chapter two, under the heading "authorship", it was revealed that some scholars regard Chronicles as part of a Chronistic history that includes Ezra-Nehemiah, an argument that this study does not agree with. Nevertheless, the results of the studies done by these scholars on Chronicles are influenced by this assumption. Commenting on these studies of Israel in the book of Chronicles which are influenced by this assumption, Williamson (1977) summarises them as follows:

> We might summarize them by saying that in the view of these books, true Israel is made up alone by those of Judah and Benjamin who had returned from the exile in Babylon, together with 'every one who had joined them and separated himself from the pollutions of the peoples of the land' (Ezra 6:21). None of the other (northern) tribes is ever mentioned, nor is the possibility conceded that some true Israelites might have continued to inhabit the land during the period of the exile. Von Rad can thus concisely say: 'Israel ist jetzt Juda und Benjamin' (1977:87).

It is fair to say this conclusion was traced from nowhere else other than from the book of Chronicles. According to Williamson (1977), 2 Chronicles 11:13 and 2 Chronicles 12:1 are especially significant for von Rad's conclusion (1977:87-88). As indicated in the tables above, the Chronicler does indeed refer to the southern kingdom as "all Israel". For the Chronicler, the southern kingdom qualified to be called "all Israel".

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[166] This refers to 2 Chronicles 11:3.

[167] According to Eskenazi (1988) "Von Rad and Rudolph are of the opinion that the true Israel for the Chronicler is Judah and Benjamin" (1988:28).

3.2.2 Northern Kingdom

Concerning the title "Israel" in relation to the northern kingdom, Williamson (1977) asks quite an interesting question: "But was the state of rebellion of the North not so great as to disqualify her altogether, as so many commentators have held?" (1977:110). Williamson (1977) in turn answers the question himself: "At the point of the division itself, this was clearly not the case. Twice, the Chronicler retains statements from his *Vorlage* that the division was brought about by God so that he might establish his word (2 Chr. 10:15, 11:14)" (1977:110). However, later Williamson (1977) observes that:

> By chapter 13, however, this situation has been completely reversed, for here the Chronicler quite evidently sees God's hand in Abijah's victory over the Northerners, and reckons it to be a vindication of the speech of Abijah in vv. 4-12. What events have intervened to justify this drastic change? (1977:111).

The events that intervened are at least two, according to Williamson. The first one is the apostasy of the northern kingdom (2 Chr 11:14ff). Commenting on this, Williamson says:

> Though the substance of this notice has been drawn from 1 Kings 12:26 – 33, it has been reworked by the Chronicler. Several important features are omitted, such as the setting up of the calves specifically at Dan and Bethel, and the calendrical alteration. However, Jeroboam's expulsion of the Levites and appointment of other priests, his worship at 'the high places' and his making of Satyrs (not in Kings) and calves are all mentioned, and constitute ample grounds in the Chronicler's eyes for severe condemnation (1977:111).

The second one is the death of Rehoboam and the accession of Abijah, which were seen as significant in this connection. In this regard, Williamson (1977) says:

> The Chronicler's doctrine of immediate retribution was so rigid that each successive king was judged entirely on his own merits, without reference back to the situation in the previous reign(s). Thus each king starts out with a completely 'clean sheet' ... At the accession of Abijah, however, as always in the Chronicler's system, a completely new start was made, with the king against whom the Northerners had with apparent justification rebelled now removed from the scene (1977:111).

These two changes in the situation between the time of the division of the monarchy and the events of 2 Chronicles 13 are the very same two points upon which Abijah bases his condemnation of the northern kingdom, so argues Williamson. This takes the argument further. According to Johnson (1988):

> A paradoxical attitude toward the northern kingdom is to be seen in such contexts as these: on the one hand the people of God must be complete; the ancient covenants between Yahweh and his people were made with all twelve tribes; the covenant had been renewed with David, the man of the covenant *par*

> *excellence*, and this Davidic covenant was itself renewed to the righteous Davidic kings ... Because of this the Chronicler speaks of 'all the remnant of Israel', that is, those of the northern tribes who were loyal to the Davidic ruler and to the Jerusalem cultus both during the divided kingdom and even after the population had become mixed with foreign elements by the king of Assyria. Extinct tribes are brought back to life in order to complete what was lacking among the people of Yahweh. And yet, on the other hand, there is the conviction that Jerusalem, the centre of the kingdom of Judah, is in a unique sense the dwelling-place of Yahweh and the sole legitimate place of his cultus where the priests and Levites, special servants of Yahweh, dwell ... Only by a return to Jerusalem and the true worship of Yahweh can Israel claim its rightful place in the Davidic theocracy (1988:49).

Johnson (1988) argues that it is paradoxical that the northern kingdom is part of "all Israel" while at the same time it is an illegitimate establishment because Jerusalem is the sole legitimate place of YHWH's cultus. This centrality of Jerusalem leads some scholars to conclude that Chronicles is exclusive. According to Dyck (1996), there are scholars who classify Chronicles as equally exclusive as Ezra-Nehemiah because of the Chronicler's Judean-Jerusalemite-Priestly tendencies (Dyck 1996:89). However, these tendencies are more based on the Davidic covenant, which was itself renewed to the righteous Davidic kings, than on ethnic exclusivity. According to the Chronicler's perception, worshipping at Jerusalem was part of the covenantal stipulations. It seems, for the Chronicler, it was more a matter of obedience to the Lord than a sense of Judean ethnic exclusivist supremacy. Describing the importance of the Davidic kingship, Howard (1993) writes as follows:

> In particular, the importance of David and Solomon as ones who established the Temple and the true religious service in Jerusalem is an important theme of 1 & 2 Chronicles. David and Solomon were both chosen by God as His royal representatives in Israel, as were their descendants. The promises to David and Solomon were in perpetuity, and the work ends with a clear note of hope (2 Chron. 36:22-23), introducing the reestablishment of the centralized worship in Jerusalem that David and Solomon had initiated (1993:257).

In light of the factors that have been raised, from the perceived Chronicler's point of view, the paradox does make sense. Just like the southern kingdom, the northern kingdom, for the Chronicler, qualified to be called "all Israel". The tables above have shown that the Chronicler called the northern kingdom "all Israel". Six times in the *Sondergut* the Chronicler refers to the northern kingdom as "all Israel".[168] Johnson (1988) observes that "this feeling of the necessity of including the northern tribes as part of 'all Israel' is hinted throughout the narrative" (1988:48).

[168] 2 Chr11:13; 2 Chr 13:4; 2 Chr 13:15; 2 Chr 30:1; 2 Chr 30:6 and 2 Chr 31:1.

3.2.3 Use of "all Israel" in Chronicles

The foregoing discussion has demonstrated that the concept "all Israel" in Chronicles, as Japhet (1997) describes it, is "used in a variety of senses without any uniformity or dogmatic significance" (1997:271). It is used to refer to the twelve tribes, to the southern kingdom and also to the northern kingdom. It is therefore reasonable to argue that this kind of use of this concept is inclusive. Both the southern kingdom and the northern kingdom are entitled to be referred to as "all Israel". As Howard (1993) argues, "one of the Chronicler's burdens was to keep the memory of 'all Israel' alive, even if it did not exist as a socio-political reality in his day. This echoes some of the prophets' insistence upon the future restoration of the entire nation" (1993:256).

4 The Temple

The foregoing section discussed the concept of "all Israel" and established that the concept included all the twelve tribes of Israel. It therefore becomes obvious that, for the Chronicler, the temple did not exclude the other ten tribes of Israel. For this reason, the study finds it unnecessary to investigate further whether the concept of "all Israel" was reflected in the presentation of the temple in Chronicles. If the concept of "all Israel" included the twelve tribes, then the ten tribes were also part of the temple establishment (cf. 2 Chr 30:1, 18-19; 2 Chr 34:6-9; 35:18). Instead, the study intends to investigate the extent of the inclusive attitude of the Chronicler's temple beyond the "all Israel" boundaries. It is thus this subsection's intention to rather investigate the Chronistic temple attitude towards foreigners (נכרי). This will then be an attempt to measure the range of the temple's inclusivity in Chronicles beyond "all Israel".

Introducing a discussion on the temple, Williamson (2004) highlights the significance of the temple in Chronicles. Williamson correctly argues that all commentators on Chronicles agree about the central significance of the temple to the Chronicler. He then reminds the reader of some "devices by which the Chronicler draws attention to the centrality of the temple in his thinking" (2004:150). For example, he observes that the Chronicler develops one verse from Kings (1 Kings 3:4 // 2 Chr 1:2-6) into five verses which are a narrative in their own right. The Chronicler changes this source material which was presented as just an introduction into a narrative of a dream that follows into a narrative in its own right, where the king leads people into a major act of sacrificial worship. It is also the first incident of Solomon's reign.

It therefore draws attention to worship, which is a significant aspect of Solomon's reign and it also invites readers to read the following chapters in that light (2004:150).

Besides extending the source material the Chronicler also shortens the material. The Chronicler radically abbreviates 1 Kings 3:5-15 in 2 Chronicles 1:7-13. Williamson explains as follows:

> The gift of wisdom to Solomon was, of course, one of the topics most widely remembered about this king. Against his *Vorlage*, however, the Chronicler no longer has the account of the dream at Gibeon followed by the illustrative example of the exercise of Solomon's wisdom in the story of the judgment between the two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). In his view, the primary purpose of Solomon's wisdom was not to equip him for civil rule but to enable him to undertake the task of temple building retold in the following chapters (2004:150-151).

Significant about these two examples is that they demonstrate that the Chronicler occasionally uses the source material while altering it at strategic points by either expansion or contraction so that it produces a new theological/ideological emphasis. It is this strategy that this subsection focuses on. Specifically, the discussion will focus on the expansion of 1 Kings 5:7-9 in 2 Chronicles 2:11-16 and the contraction of 1 Kings 8:41-43 in 2 Chronicles 6:32-33 so that they produce new theological/ideological emphases.

However, there are two viewpoints that will be guiding this study in its reading of these above-mentioned texts. Firstly, the study needs to state its standpoint as far as the problem of the differences between parallel texts is concerned. Kalimi (2005) mentions two approaches to this problem. The first approach argues that the changes stem primarily from the Chronicler's deliberate and purposeful reworking of the earlier sources. The second approach argues that these differences reflect divergent emphases and usages employed by the authors of Samuel-Kings on the one hand, and the Chronicler on the other, in editing the earlier, detailed "third common source" to which they both had access (2005:3). Knoppers (2000) also states that scholars generally agree that the Chronicler also had access to extra biblical sources, but the nature and extent of these sources are disputed (2000:242). The problem of differences in parallel texts may therefore be solved in any of these approaches. The study is more comfortable with the former approach than the latter one. Curtis and Madsen's (1910) argument sounds satisfactory when they say:

> The Chronicler then used our present canonical books and not their sources for all matter common to both works. He might still, however, have used their sources for material not found in the canonical books, but of this there is not the slightest evidence and in form all new material (excluding

> genealogical matter and the list of David's additional heroes, I Chr 11:41b-47) is of the composition or style of the Chronicler (1910:21, cf. also Van Seters 1997:287).

Kalimi (2005) claims that "at the present time, the number of scholars who believe that the vast majority of differences between the parallel texts result from the Chronicler's purposefully tendentious adaptation of the text is steadily growing" (2005:6). This study also joins the supporters of this approach and the attitude of the Chronicler towards the foreigner is understood more in the light of the Chronicler's purposefully tendentious adaptation of the text.

Secondly, Japhet (1997) argues that "Chronicles' attitude towards the foreigners who inhabited the land in the time of Hezekiah and Josiah is in keeping with the book's position on foreigners in general" (1997:334-335). Concluding the section on foreigners and aliens, Japhet (1997) claims that "the book of Chronicles expresses a consistent attitude towards foreigners living in the land of Israel: no distinct, separate foreign population exists in the land" (1997:351). The study adds on Japhet's conclusion that according to the Chronicler, no human being is not under the jurisdiction of YHWH.[169] The Pentateuchal genealogies in Chronicles which start with the proto-human Adam and thereby set the historical narrative of Chronicles in a universal framework are understood in this light by this study. To underestimate this universal framework may lead to missing some very interesting nuances in the book of Chronicles (Jonker Forthcoming: 12). In short, the study bases the forthcoming discussion on these two suppositions, namely no "third common source" and no human being not under the jurisdiction of YHWH. The next section is going to look at how the Chronicler presents 1 Kings 5:7-9.

4.1 Preparing to Build the Temple (1 Kings 5:7-9 // 2 Chronicles 2:11-16)

Describing literary forms in 1 Chronicles, Braun (1986) mentions speeches, sermons and prayers. He then refers to an unnamed genre consisting mainly of extracts from Samuel-Kings, often related verbatim, but also with alterations, additions, and deletions (1986:xxiv). This unnamed genre the study identifies as the narratives. Braun further explains: "While some of these variations may be due to a different text-type utilized by the author, it seems likely that most reflect the mind of the author of Chronicles himself, who has used this means to convey Israel's past in such a way as to make it more ideologically appropriate to his concerns for the present" (1986: xxiv). Of interest for this discussion are the speeches and

[169] Cf. 2 Chr 2:12; 2 Chr 20:6; 2 Chr 35:21-22; 2 Chr 36:22-23.

narratives, for they constitute the text to be examined, namely 1 Kings 5:1-18. The Chronicler uses the narrative in 1 Kings 5:1-18 almost verbatim (in 2 Chr 2:1-18), but also makes some alterations and additions to it. The additions are the subject of this discussion. The focus of this discussion specifically, is 1 Kings 5:7-9 // 2 Chronicles 2:11-16. 1 Kings 5:7-9 is retold by the Chronicler with additions in 2 Chronicles 2:11-16. This passage is a speech, in fact, a direct speech by King Hiram/Huram[170] of Tyre responding to King Solomon's request. At this juncture, it is imperative to note what Jonker (2008), says about direct speeches. Depicting the role of direct speech in a biblical narrative, Jonker (2008) states:

> Direct speech gives a dramatic character to narratives in the sense that this technique makes the characters in the story present, so to speak, in the minds of the audience. However, the presentation of direct speech in narratives is much more a reflection of the narrator's intention than of the characters' thoughts. Direct speech in narratives remains *reported* direct speech. The narrator deliberately chooses to give voice to certain characters at certain times, and decides what these characters will say. Equally, the narrator chooses which characters remain silent. By analyzing the direct speech person constellations, that is, who addresses whom, as well as the content of the direct speech, that is what information is conveyed in the direct speech, one could get a glimpse of what the narrator wanted to achieve with the narrative (2008:705).

Taking Braun's and Jonker's deliberations into consideration, the discussion will now examine how the Chronicler conveys his theological/ideological convictions through an extract from 1 Kings 5:7-9. Before doing the examination, let us compare the parallel texts below:

1 Kings 5:7-9 (NRSV)	2 Chronicles 2:11-16 (NRSV)
[7] When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly, and said, "Blessed be the LORD today, who has given to David a wise son to be over this great people."	[11] Then King Huram of Tyre answered in a letter that he sent to Solomon, "Because the LORD loves his people he has made you king over them."
	[12] Huram also said, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, ***who made heaven and earth***, who has given King David a wise son, endowed with discretion and understanding, who will build a temple for the LORD, and a royal palace for himself.
	[13] "I have dispatched Huram-abi, a skilled artisan, endowed with understanding, [14] ***the son of one of the Danite women, his father a Tyrian***. He is trained to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and wood, and in purple, blue, and crimson

[170] The Deuteronomist calls him Hiram and the Chronicler calls him Huram. When reference is to the Deuteronomist Hiram will be used and Huram when referring to the Chronicler's use of the name.

	fabrics and fine linen, and to do all sorts of engraving and execute any design that may be assigned him, with your artisans, the artisans of my lord, your father David.
[8] Hiram sent word to Solomon, "I have heard the message that you have sent to me; I will fulfill all your needs in the matter of cedar and cypress timber. [9] My servants shall bring it down to the sea from the Lebanon; I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you indicate. I will have them broken up there for you to take away. And you shall meet my needs by providing food for my household."	[15] Now, as for the wheat, barley, oil, and wine, of which my lord has spoken, let him send them to his servants. [16] We will cut whatever timber you need from Lebanon, and bring it to you as rafts by sea to Joppa; you will take it up to Jerusalem."

Table 3: Synopsis of King Huram of Tyre Story

As much as the Chronicler retells what the Deuteronomist has already told, he nevertheless leaves Chronistic traces in this passage. Huram's acknowledgement of YHWH as the creator of heaven and earth, which Japhet (1993) calls the "Chronistic elaboration" is identified by Dillard (1987) as comparable with that of the Queen of Sheba (9:7-9) and Cyrus (36:23) (1987:23). Williamson (1982) says of the Chronicler's re-ordering of this passage: "The result is that, while hardly at any point are we in doubt as to his source, in fact very little indeed could strictly speaking be called 'parallel'" (1982:197). In fact, adding Neco of Egypt (2 Chr 35:20-27) in the list of Huram, Queen of Sheba and Cyrus points to a certain trend within the Chronicler's narrative.[171] The point here is that in this passage we can pick out the strands of the Chronistic theology on foreigners. The universalistic theological framework of the Chronicler betrays itself here. Huram, a foreigner, knows about God and acknowledges Him as creator of heaven and earth. Huram-abi,[172] on the other hand, is a son of a Danite woman and a Tyrian man. These are both Chronistic additions. Both these foreigners are to participate in the biggest ever project of the history of Israel, the most religious project ever, namely the building of Solomon's temple. Even more interesting, this is narrated during the Second Temple period, when the relationship of the temple and foreigners was a crucial issue. This passage is an example of the ethnic theology/ideology of the Chronicler expressed in the presentation of the temple. In this passage the temple is presented inclusively by the Chronicler. In this passage the Chronicler made additions to reveal something of his

[171] Ben-Zvi (1999) indicates that the Chronicler presents a favourable image of foreign monarchs through the speeches that are put in their mouths. Ben Zvi thereby reveals the Chronicler's inclusive thinking about foreign monarchs.
[172] He is also related to Dan, an Israelite tribe.

theology/ideology. In the next discussion we look at an omission by the Chronicler to see whether there is any theological/ideological significance.

4.2 Dedicating the Temple (2 Chr 6:1-42 // 1 Kgs 8:12-61)

Above we looked at additions that the Chronicler made to 1 Kings 5:7-9 which introduced a distinct theological/ideological perception. In this subsection we will look at an omission in 2 Chronicles 6:32. The intention is to investigate whether the omission is a result of a use of another source apart from the Masoretic text, haplography,[173] or an intentional theological/ideological omission. This examination is instigated by the idea that most of the variations in Chronicles reflect the mind of the author of Chronicles himself. Let us look at the verses themselves first:

1 Kings 8:41-42	2 Chronicles 6:32
וְגַם אֶל־הַנָּכְרִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־מֵעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא וּבָא מֵאֶרֶץ רְחוֹקָה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ כִּי יִשְׁמְעוּן אֶת־שִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְאֶת־יָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה וּזְרֹעֲךָ הַנְּטוּיָה וּבָא וְהִתְפַּאלֵּל אֶל־הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה...	וְגַם אֶל־הַנָּכְרִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא מֵעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא וּבָא מֵאֶרֶץ רְחוֹקָה לְמַעַן שִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְיָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה וּזְרוֹעֲךָ הַנְּטוּיָה וּבָאוּ וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֶל־הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה...
Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your name – ***for they shall hear of your great name***, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm – when they come and pray toward this house, …	Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your great name, and your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house, …

The verses are identical except the omission of the bold, italicised and underlined reason clause and the verbs that are changed from singular to plural at the end of the text. The study regards the verb changes as insignificant but the omission as significant. We will now look at three possible explanations for this omission, namely, "third common source", haplography and theological/ideological motive.

The first possible explanation of an omission of this nature may be that the Chronicler's *Vorlage* of Kings was of a different type as the *textus receptus*. According to McKenzie (1985), "where C[174] contains different or additional information from S-K[175] that does not derive from textual variation or from Chr's bias, it is certainly reasonable to propose that Chr has used a source unknown to us" (1985:28). However, in the light of a comment by

[173] Haplography is "a mistake in writing, when a copyist wrote once what should have been written twice. Sometimes used to refer to any omission" (Klein 1974: x).
[174] The Chronicler.
[175] Samuel-Kings.

Williamson (1987) in a review of McKenzie's monograph,[176] this explanation is not sufficient. Williamson says:

> More significant in the long term is his [McKenzie's – NSC] carefully argued contention that the Chronicler's Vorlage for Kings was far closer to the MT than it was in the case of Samuel. It has been known for some time now that small differences between the MT of Samuel and Chronicles have to be treated with caution because of the sometimes significantly differing witnesses to the Hebrew text of Samuel. This has been generally taken into account by recent writing on Chronicles, and some have gone on to assume that the same situation prevailed in the books of Kings. In a forty page excursus, however, McKenzie establishes that in many cases where the MT of Kings may be corrupt or secondary, Chronicles is nevertheless dependent upon it in contrast with the alternative witness of the Greek text of Kings (Williamson 1987:109).

The "third common source" explanation is not a satisfactory explanation for the omission in 2 Chronicles 6:32. It is therefore advisable to look for another explanation.

A more common explanation of this omission is a haplographic condition known as *homoioteleuton* (McKenzie 1985:95; Tov 1992: 239; Johnstone 1997a:350). *Homoioteleuton* is defined by Tov (1992) as the erroneous omission of a section influenced by the repetition of one or more words in the same context in an identical or similar way. In these cases the eye of the copyist (or translator) jumped from the first appearance of a word (or words) to its (their) second appearance, so that in the copied text (or translation) the intervening section was omitted together with one of the repeated elements, explains Tov (1992:238; cf. also Klein 1974:x). Because this error involves a copyist of the Masoretic text, the study reasons that it does not have to be repeated in other ancient manuscripts of Chronicles as well. It is thus a reasonable move to cross-check this omission against other relevant ancient manuscripts. Unfortunately, from the Qumran manuscripts, the only manuscript on Chronicles is 4QChr/4Q118. According to Barrera (2000), "only one fragment of this manuscript is extant, containing portions of 2 Chr 28:27-29:3 preceded by some additional, unidentified text" (2000:295). This means the Qumran manuscripts cannot help us in our investigation. The Septuagint and the Vulgate show that their Hebrew sources were almost identical with the Masoretic text (MT) because they agree with it in its wording. *Homoioteleuton* could still have occurred at an earlier time in the transmission history of the Hebrew text. Here the textual representatives do not help the *homoioteleuton* argument much

[176] *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History* (1985).

– but they do not hinder it either. One might therefore want to look for other content-related factors to try to understand the omission.

If we examine the speeches Solomon made during the dedication of the temple in 1 Kings 8:12-61 and in the parallel text of 2 Chronicles 6:1-42, we find that the Chronicler did his best to copy the text verbatim. However, where there seems to be a different theological/ideological emphasis, he did not hesitate to do the necessary intervention, so observes this study. This observation is a support-base for an argument that the omission in 2 Chronicles 6:32 is theologically/ideologically motivated. This part of the discussion thus has a responsibility to prove that the Chronicler theologically edited the source text where he deemed necessary. To initiate this task, we will follow Levenson's (1981) division of 1 Kings 8:12-61. Levenson (1981) divides Solomon's addresses during the dedication of the temple into four parts:[177]

1. 1 Kings 8:12-13: Introduction;
2. 1 Kings 8:15-21: Solomon's speech;
3. 1 Kings 8:23-53: Solomon's prayer of dedication;
4. 1 Kings 8:56-61: Solomon's blessing of the assembly (Benediction).

These addresses are each introduced by the following verses: 1 Kings 8:10-12; 14-15; 22-23 and 54-55 respectively. The addresses that are relevant for our discussion are the third (1 Kings 8: 23-53) and the fourth (1 Kings 8: 56-61). We will begin with the last address, 1 Kings 8: 56-61, because it seems there is some consensus about its omission (cf. McKenzie 1985:85-86; Williamson 1977:65). We will then return to the third one, 1 Kings 8: 23-53.

4.2.1 Solomon's blessing of the assembly: 1 Kings 8:56-61(No parallel, replaced)

This blessing carries a theological emphasis. It emphasises the covenant the Lord made with Israel, "which he spoke through his servant Moses" (1 Kings 8:56). It pleads with the Lord to keep the covenant while also exhorting the people to devote themselves completely to the Lord their God. The Chronicler omitted this address and instead replaced it with the one that emphasises the Davidic covenant. McKenzie (1985) comments as follows to this omission:

> This is the fifth[178] part of Solomon's speech at the dedication of the Temple. Chr has altered the end of the fourth speech, inserting excerpts from Ps 132 in a different version from M. The net effect is to locate the source of Israel's hope in Yahweh's promise to David and his concern for the Temple rather

[177] The headings of the divisions are not Levenson's, however.
[178] McKenzie identifies this address as the fifth part of Solomon's speech while we identify it as the fourth address.

> than in the covenant with Moses. This does not mean that Chr sees Moses and David or their respective covenants as somehow opposed to each other. The change here simply illustrates the importance that Chr attaches to the Davidic covenant (1985:85-86).

The most important thing about this quotation is the confirmation that there is a shift of emphasis from Moses to David. Williamson's comment is even more illuminating of the motive of the Chronicler:

> In both accounts, Solomon's prayer ends with an appeal to God. In I Ki. 8:52 – 3, the appeal is that God will hear the prayer of his people, and it is based on the fact that they were separated out for God at the time of the Exodus. It thus adds nothing to what has already been said in the substance of the prayer as a whole. In 2 Chr. 6:40 – 2, however, whilst the request that the people's prayer be heard is retained, the final appeal is *zkrh lḥsdy dwyd 'bdk* – 'remember the mercies of David thy servant'. This adds a new request to the prayer, but one that is fully in accord with the Chronicler's understanding of the significance of the dedication of the temple, namely that as God's promises have found an initial fulfilment in these events, so they will continue to be realized in like measure thereafter. The basis for this appeal, of course, must therefore be sought in the covenant of 1 Chr.17. It is hoped that this brief sketch of the Chronicler's familiar stance on these issues will be sufficient to support the contention that in his description of the dedication of the temple, he has a point of his own to make, and one that inevitably detracts from the emphasis of the Deuteronomist on the Exodus events ... (1977:65).

The highlight of this quotation for this discussion is the contention that in his description of the dedication of the temple, the Chronicler has a point of his own to make and one that inevitably detracts from the emphasis of the Deuteronomist on the Exodus events. Williamson's contention supports the point made above, namely, where there is a different theological/ideological emphasis, the Chronicler did not hesitate to do the necessary intervention. The next discussion will try to prove this contention further in the third address (1 Kings 8:23-53).

4.2.2 Solomon's prayer of dedication: 1 Kings 8:23-53

In this address, Solomon makes seven requests to the Lord.[179] Four of these seven requests are inserted with reason clauses to explain why the Lord has to respond positively to his requests.[180] The reason clauses will now be discussed one by one:

1 Kings 8:39	2 Chronicles 6:30
ככל דרכיו אשׁר תדה את־לבבו כי אתה ידעת לבדך את־לבב כל־בני האדמה	ככל דרכיו אשר תדה את־לבבו כי אתה לבדך ידעת[181] את־לבב בני אדמה
According to his ways, because you know his heart, for you alone knows the heart of all the sons of man.	According to his ways, because you know his heart, for you alone knows the heart of the sons of man

[179] 1 Kings 8:31-32 // 2 Chr 6:22-23; 1 Kings 8:33-34 // 2 Chr 6:24-25; 1 Kings 8:35-36 // 2 Chr 6:26-27; 1 Kings 8:37-40 // 2 Chr 6:28-31; 1 Kings 8:41-43 // 2 Chr 6:32-33; 1 Kings 8:44-45 / /2 Chr 6:34-35; 1 Kings 8:46-51 // 2 Chr 6:36-39.

[180] 1 Kings 8:37-40 // 2 Chr 6:28-31; 1 Kings 8:41-43 // 2 Chr 6:32-33; 1 Kings 8:44-45 // 2 Chr 6:34-35; 1 Kings 8:46-51 which has no parallel reason clause.

[181] Two insignificant differences: לבדך is in front of ידעת while in the parallel verse it is *vice versa* and בני instead of

כל־בני.

This reason clause is taken verbatim by the Chronicler. In other words, there is no change whatsoever made by the Chronicler, except that the Deuteronomist says “all the son of man” while the Chronicler does not include “all”. This is an insignificant omission. The study also finds that there is no theological emphasis in this clause.

The next reason clause is 2 Kings 8:42 // 2 Chronicles 6:32 which is also the bone of contention so we will skip it and deal with it lastly.

Let us then look at the next reason clause, 1 Kings 8:46 // 2 Chronicles 6:36:

1 Kings 8:46	2 Chronicles 6:36
כִּי אֵין אָדָם אֲשֶׁר לא־יחטע	כִּי אֵין אָדָם אֲשֶׁר לא־יחטע
For there is no man who does not sin	For there is no man who does not sin

This reason clause, like 1 Kings 8:39, is taken verbatim by the Chronicler and the study finds no theological emphasis. So far we have had clauses with no conspicuous theological emphasis and the Chronicler has copied them verbatim, without changes. In the seventh request there are two reason clauses. Let us now take a look at these reason clauses (1 Kings 8:51 & 53):

1 Kings 8: 51	1 Kings 8:53
כי־עמך ונחלתך הם אשׁר הוצאת ממצרים מתוך כור הברזל	כי־אתה הבדלתם לך לנחלה מצל עמי הארץ כאשׁר דברת ביד משה עבדך בהוציאך את־אבותינו ממצרים אדוני יהוה
For they are your people and heritage, which you brought out of Egypt, from the midst of the iron-smelter	For you have separated them from among all the peoples of the earth, to be your heritage, just as you promised through Moses, your servant, when you brought our ancestors out of Egypt, O Lord God

These reason clauses have a theological emphasis. They both bring attention to the Exodus tradition. The coming out from Egypt, and Moses, give a theological flavour to these clauses. The Chronicler has omitted both of these reason clauses. The Chronicler copied the request verbatim from verse 46//36 until verse 49//39. He then shortened the principal clause of verse

50 and co-opted it into verse 49 while omitting its subordinate clause, which is the reason clause in 1 Kings 8:51. He also omitted the following principal clause with its subordinate clause, which is the reason clause in 1 Kings 8:53. Both reason clauses, as it has already been indicated, brought attention to the Exodus tradition. By doing this, the Chronicler rendered this seventh request theologically neutral. He then connected his theologically charged ending (2 Chr 6:40-42) just beneath this neutralised verse, registering the Davidic covenant in the mind of the reader. This whole process brings Williamson's (1977) contention to mind that the Chronicler "has a point of his own to make, and one that inevitably detracts from the emphasis of the Deuteronomist on the Exodus events ..." (1977:65). Again, the study finds in this observation support for the contention made above, namely, where there seems to be a different theological/ideological emphasis, the Chronicler did not hesitate to do the necessary intervention. In this case, the Chronicler intervened to replace the emphasis on the Exodus with an emphasis on the Davidic tradition. Let us now proceed to examine 2 Chronicles 6:32.

4.2.3 2 Chronicles 6:32

Before examining this verse, the study would like to bring to attention two points made in different writings by Jonker. Firstly, Jonker (2012) argues that the postexilic communities finalising both the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History worked from the mindset which was still captivated by the exilic experience, despite the liberation from Babylonian captivity. He further argues that "Chronicles is different! ... With the inclusion of the mostly priestly genealogies from the Pentateuch, and with the addition of the ending with Cyrus speaking on behalf of God, the Chronicler has created a *universalistic context* for understanding the history of Israel. This history is in continuity with the past, but simultaneously breaks out of the confines of the past[182]" (2012: 330). Secondly, Jonker highlights the fact that the influence of the international situation of the time on the origin of writings such as Chronicles is often underestimated. Expressing this sentiment about the reading of the story of Saul (1 Chr 10) he says:

> I am of the opinion that the rhetorical thrust of this narrative, as part of the Chronicler's overall construction, has not been grasped sufficiently yet, because the international (Persian) context of the time of origin has not been taken into account adequately (2010:284).

[182] Elaborating on the argument, Jonker rhetorically questions: "Could this be another indication that the mindset of the Chronicler was not an "exilic" one? The Chronicler is not primarily reflecting on the past in order to establish what went wrong so that Israel landed up in exile. He is rather reflecting on how Israel's past would situate themselves in a new dispensation – a dispensation which became a reality because they were liberated from exilic bondage by Persians" (2012:330).

These points will be picked up later as the discussion progresses.

Keeping the above-mentioned points in mind, let us return to 2 Chronicles 6:32. According to the Deuteronomist, foreigners are still to hear in the future of God's great name (יִשְׁמְעוּן אֶת־שִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל).. The present study, however, detects a contradiction between this phrase and the impression created by the portrayal of Huram of Tyre, the Queen of Sheba, Neco of Egypt and Cyrus of Persia in Chronicles. These foreign royals know about the God of Israel and some even implement His instructions. To have included this phrase in 2 Chronicles 6:32 the Chronicler would have contradicted an impression he has created somewhere else in the book. However, omitting the phrase fits within the broader scheme of things in the narrative. As Jonker (2012) indicates, the Chronicler is unlike the postexilic communities who finalised both the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History from a mindset which was still captivated by the exilic experience. The Chronicler rather breaks out of the confines of the past. Furthermore, as Jonker (2012) further indicates, very interesting nuances will be missed of the book of Chronicles is not also situated in its wider international context. The influence of the international situation of the time on the origin of writings such as Chronicles has a strong impact on the thoughts of the Chronicler as a writer of the time. The fact that a foreigner like Cyrus can be acknowledged as the "messiah" (2 Chr 36:22-23) is testimony to a mindset free of the confines of the exilic experience. 2 Chronicles 6:32 is one such interesting nuance that can be missed if Chronicles is not also situated in its wider international context.

It has been repeatedly said above that in his description of the dedication of the temple, the Chronicler has a point of his own to make and where there seems to be a different theological/ideological emphasis, he does not hesitate to do the necessary intervention. That has been demonstrated in the reason clauses that were scrutinized above. Where there is no own theological emphasis, no change is made by the Chronicler. However, where the Chronicler wanted to express his own theological emphasis, he made the necessary changes. In light of these observations, the present study senses a theological motive in the omission in 2 Chronicles 6:32.

[183] The exilic period is a period when Israel was oppressed by foreign people who worshipped strange gods. In the eyes of the exiles during those circumstances, the foreigners could not have known God but because God was going to reverse the misfortunes, the nations would be defeated and they would ultimately succumb to the one and the only God. It's all in the future.

4.3 The Chronicler's Theological/Ideological Presentation of the Temple

The aim of the previous subsection was to prove that the additions and the omission in 2 Chronicles 2:11-16 and 2 Chronicles 6:32 respectively, depict the theology of the Chronicler vis-à-vis the Deuteronomist. The study argues further that these verses can be used to investigate the theology/ideology of the Chronicler in his presentation of the temple. In both instances, the foreigner is not discriminated against. In the first instance, Huram is being drawn into the building of the temple while he is portrayed as a God-knowing foreign king who also blesses YHWH. His servant Huram-abi is charged with the task of leading the team and is also portrayed as related to Dan, an Israelite tribe. The temple here is bringing the foreigner in and not pushing him out. The temple is presented inclusively. In the second instance, the foreigner is pleaded for so that s/he can enter the temple and be granted his/her request while s/he is implicitly portrayed as knowing God. The Deuteronomist on the other hand, points into the future for the foreigners to know God. The presentation of the temple community by the Chronicler is again inclusive.

To elaborate on the above assertion, the study examines a statement made by Jonker (2012). Commenting on the themes in the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History (DH), Jonker argues that "the postexilic communities finalising these literary constructions worked from a mindset which was still captivated by the exilic experience" (2012:330). He continues to argue that Chronicler is different; his mindset was not an "exilic" one. He argues that:

> The Chronicler is not primarily reflecting on the past in order to establish what went wrong so that Israel landed up in exile. He is rather reflecting on how Israel's past would situate the people in the new dispensation – a dispensation which became a reality because they were liberated from exilic bondage by the Persians (2012:330).

The study brings two things to attention in this regard: that an exilic mindset harboured negativity about the "nations" and that the exile was a temporary situation that God was going to rectify. The difference between 2 Kings 8:41-42 and 2 Chronicles 6:32 is understood by this study in this light. In Kings the foreigner does not yet know God but s/he will in the future. From the point of view of the exilic mindset this means; a foreigner is the reason why Israel is in exile so can not be seen in a positive light. To know Israel's God is a positive thing. It also means that God is still to rescue Israel from the hand of the foreigner and the foreigners will see that Israel's God is Great. On the other hand, the Chronicler presents God as a universal God, His reign has no boundaries. He rules over Israel and foreigners as well. He speaks to the foreigners and instructs them to carry out His wishes, as indicated in King

Neco of Egypt and King Cyrus of Persia. King Huram of Tyre is quoted as saying: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who made heaven and earth…" (2 Chr 2:11). Huram knows Israel's God and this sentence does not appear in Kings. This section is concluded by a quotation from Jonker concerning Neco and Cyrus, he says:

> In Kings the foreign monarchs are consistently portrayed negatively. The Chronicler, however, turns at least two foreign kings into conveyors of Yahweh's message. It is clear that the Chronicler, although acknowledging the political and military power of these foreign monarchs, portrays them as being under Yahweh's dominion. These kings are not portrayed as antagonists in history, but rather as those characters who are acting out Yahweh's plan with history (2008: 717).

5 Implications for the Study

Chronicles is simultaneously an attempt to reformulate and sanitize the older traditions about the past, as well as an attempt to reformulate the identity of God's people in the changed socio-historical circumstances of the late Persian era.[184] One of the examples of this understanding of Chronicles is found in Howard (1993) when he says "one of the Chronicler's burdens was to keep the memory of 'all Israel' alive, even if it did not exist as a socio-political reality in his day" (1993:256). Howard's sentiment is somehow contained in Schweitzer's (2007) reading of utopia in Chronicles. According to Schweitzer:

> … if Chronicles is utopian in character, then its cultic practices and systems may reflect *desired* (but not necessarily implemented) changes and, therefore, not historical realities. Thus, the Chronicler may have been constructing an "ideal" or *desired* system which would possibly be implemented in the future; that is, the Chronicler may not be legitimizing current practice but rather offering an alternative system that would change the present structure … From this perspective, Chronicles provides an excellent source for looking once more at the *problems* and *ideological struggles* of the late Persian or early Hellenistic period, rather than at a text produced by those elite who are advocating a continuation of the *status quo* (2007:29-30).

Conspicuous in these arguments is that the Chronicler is taking an initiative to transform his community. He is giving guidance as to how the community should operate. This is significant for our discussion on ethnicity as it confirms Barth's (1994) emphasis on the entrepreneurial role in ethnic politics. By his concept of "all Israel", the Chronicler is engaging in the process of reformulating ethnic boundaries vis-à-vis the existing ethnic boundaries (*status quo*). This reinforces the argument that ethnicity is not a given, original,

[184] See Jonker (2007).

fixed and permanent entity. Instead, ethnic identity is elastic and people are flexible about their identity in different situations.

This takes us to the next step of the argument, namely: what kind of social categorisation does the Chronicler emphasise. In the genealogical introduction, the Chronicler affirms that all human beings originate from the proto-human, Adam. In other words, nations are not just different but they are also common. They have the same origin. Further, through the stories of Huram of Tyre (2 Chr 2:12), Neco of Egypt (2 Chr 35:20-27) and Cyrus of Persia (2 Chr 36:23) this commonality is emphasised. There is one God for all humanity. Further more, the fact that Huram-abi has a Tyrian father and a Danite mother emphasises commonality within different people (2 Chr 2:14). The Chronicler emphasises crossed categorization. Crossed categorization minimises social conflict. The passages mentioned above about foreigners depict a less hostile attitude towards the other. Chronicles reveals an inclusive ethnic theology/ideology.

6 Conclusion

The discussion started by presenting the contents of Chronicles. The contents are divided into three divisions, namely, introduction (1 Chr 1-9), united kingdom (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 9) and the southern kingdom (2 Chr 10-2 Chr 36). The introduction can basically be divided into 1 Chronicles 1:1-2:2 (international standing of Israel), 1 Chronicles 2:3-9:1 (composition and scope of Israel until the exile) and 1 Chronicles 9:2-44 (Israel after exile). The second division (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 9) welds together the reigns of David and Solomon so that they are presented as a single, unified "event" in the history of the Chronicler's people and also demonstrates that Solomon brought to fulfilment the work begun by David. The third division of the contents (2 Chr 10-2 Chr 36) is a theological evaluation of each king's reign until the temple was destroyed by Babylon and the restoration under Cyrus.

The next section of our chapter above dealt specifically with the motif of "all Israel" to establish whether Chronicles is ethnically exclusive or inclusive. In seven instances he uses the concept in a phrase that is transferred verbatim. In twelve cases the Chronicler changes his underlying source slightly. In twenty-seven instances he uses the concept on his own. The material is either the Chronicler's original passages or just small insertions of verses or passages in the source material and the concept is found therein. This latter category is referred to as the *Sondergut*. The examination of the concept was carried out only in the *Sondergut*. The examination revealed that, for the Chronicler, the concept of "all Israel" is

based on the twelve-tribe theme. A further revelation of the examination is that the twelve-tribe theme, in turn, is applied to both the united kingdom and the divided kingdom. In the texts on the divided kingdom the concept of "all Israel" is applied to both the northern and the southern kingdoms. It is "used in a variety of senses without any uniformity or dogmatic significance" (Japhet 1997:271). Both the southern kingdom and the northern kingdom are entitled to be referred to as "all Israel". It is therefore reasonable to argue that this kind of use of the concept is ethnically inclusive.

To further examine the inclusivity of the Chronicler's ethnic theology/ideology, the presentation of the temple in Chronicles was also investigated. The discussion on the concept of "all Israel" revealed that the Chronicler's ethnic theology/ideology embraced the twelve-tribe theme so that all the twelve tribes of Israel are included. For this reason, the discussion on the temple moved beyond the twelve tribes to investigate the attitude towards the foreigner as far as the temple is concerned. Primarily, two things were looked at regarding the temple, namely, the role of the foreigner with regard to the building of the temple (2 Chr 2:11-16) and the services of the temple in connection with the foreigner (2 Chr 6:32). The following results emerged: Firstly, the foreigner is given an opportunity to take part in the building of the temple (Huram & Huram-abi). Secondly, the foreigner is welcomed to enjoy the privileges provided by the temple and is also implicitly regarded as even knowing the Lord as well. This attitude is quite accommodative of the foreigner so that the presentation of the temple in Chronicles is regarded as inclusive by this study.

Finally, two observations have been made regarding Chronicles. Firstly, Chronicles confirms Frederik Barth's emphasis on the entrepreneurial role in ethnic politics. Schweitzer (2007) speculates that "the Chronicler may have been constructing an 'ideal' or *desired* system which would possibly be implemented in the future" (2007:29). If this speculation is taken into consideration, the entrepreneurial role is affirmed. Secondly, by not just emphasising differences between Israel and the nations while overlooking similarities, Chronicles emphasises crossed categorisation. This kind of social categorization minimises social conflict and promotes community solidarity. Crossed categorization is more accommodative of the other and thereby more inclusive in nature than exclusive. By emphasising crossed categorization, Chronicles' ethnic theology/ideology is inclusive.

Chapter Seven

The Impact of an Identity Formation Process on a Reconstruction Process

1 Introduction

One presupposition of this study contends that the book of Ezra-Nehemiah contains an exclusive ethnic theology/ideology while the book of Chronicles contains an inclusive ethnic theology/ideology. The discussions in chapter four on Ezra-Nehemiah and chapter five on Chronicles affirmed this contention. According to those chapters, these books have different ethnic theologies/ideologies and therefore different approaches to the so-called "other". According to Ezra-Nehemiah Judah and Benjamin (including the Levites) constitute "all Israel" and any other group is the "other". Chronicles on the other hand brings in all the twelve tribes as constituents of "all Israel". Additionally, Chronicles also recognizes all humanity as originating from the same proto-human, Adam, while Ezra-Nehemiah regards other nations as "enemies of Judah and Benjamin". Another presupposition of the study contends that identity formation[185] can either weaken or strengthen community solidarity, depending on whether it is an exclusive or an inclusive social process. An exclusive identity formation process weakens community solidarity and thereby increases chances of social conflict. On the other hand an inclusive identity formation process strengthens community solidarity and by that decreases chances of social conflict. The study therefore hypothesized that reconstruction is retarded by social conflict (exclusivity) and facilitated by community solidarity (inclusivity). The intention of this chapter is to explore this contention of the hypothesis in relation to Ezra-Nehemiah on the one hand and Chronicles on the other. The ensuing discussion will start by reiterating the argument on *identity formation and community solidarity*. The next phase will be a discussion on the reconstruction of worship during the Second Temple period in the province of Yehud. Under this discussion there will be sub-sections on Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles respectively. The same format will be followed in the next section which will be discussing the reconstruction of the community. After all the presentations, a comparison of the above-mentioned phenomena as they occurred in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles will follow.

[185] It is ethnic formation in this particular case.

2 Identity Formation and Community Solidarity

Before we get into the impact of identity formation on community solidarity in Ezra-Nehemiah on the one hand and Chronicles on the other, it may be useful to remind ourselves again about Tajfel's (1978) argument that group membership that follows upon the "recognition of identity in socially defined terms" bears consequences. According to Tajfel, if a group does not enhance its members' self-image/esteem, some will tend to leave it. But, it can also be impossible for the members to leave the group for some "objective" reasons or because it conflicts with important values which are themselves a part of their acceptable self image. If leaving the group presents the difficulties just mentioned, then the members accept the situation for what it is and engage in social action which would lead to desirable changes for the situation (Tajfel 1978:64)[186]. It is this social action that has a potential for social conflict. When social conflict sets in, community solidarity is threatened. Bearing in mind this argument, the discussion on Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles continues.

3 Reconstruction of Worship

When the people of Judah were taken into exile their worship system was grossly disrupted. Essentially, the destruction of the temple by the Babylonians was a heavy blow to the worship system of the Judeans. So, when they returned to Judah due to Cyrus' granting of semi-autonomy, their primary responsibility was to restore/reconstruct the temple, which was the core of the whole worship system of the Judean people. However, the rebuilding of the temple was not an isolated phenomenon from the general conceptualization of the Judean community. Because of this factor, the reconstruction of the temple was not immune from the theologies/ideologies that pervaded Judah during this period. For this reason, one finds different theological/ideological perspectives transpiring out of different literary works that dealt with the temple during this period. Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles are such literary works. While Ezra-Nehemiah narrates the actual reconstruction of the Second Temple, Chronicles writes about the First Temple, although in the narrative one can pick up what can be perceived as theological/ideological thoughts addressing the Second Temple community complexities. In fact, the Chronicler used the past to influence his present. The following discussion will investigate whether the exclusive ethnic theology/ideology of Zerubbabel portrayed in Ezra-Nehemiah retarded or facilitated the reconstruction of the temple. The

[186] For example, if being black undermines one's self-esteem, it is unfortunate that one cannot stop being black, as well. In that case, one accepts blackness but engages in social action that will bring changes that enhance the self-image of a black person.

inclusive ethnic theology/ideology of Solomon as presented by the Chronicler will also be investigated, whether it facilitated or retarded the construction of Solomon's temple.

3.1 Ezra-Nehemiah

Grabbe (1998) observes that there are several significant themes arising out of the Ezra-Nehemiah narrative. The study agrees with Grabbe that the main theme is God's providence and care for His people. However, being God's people demands obedience to the Lord all the time. According to Grabbe "[a] second theme is a part of this obedience: to keep pure by eschewing marriage to and even contact with 'foreigners' and the 'peoples of the land'" (1998:182). It is this second theme that informs the identity formation process in the Ezra-Nehemiah narrative. The rebuilding of the temple in Ezra-Nehemiah is informed by this exclusive ethnic theology/ideology. Ezra 4 demonstrates the identity formation process in Ezra-Nehemiah and its impact on reconstruction very well. The so-called adversaries and the "people of the land" are excluded from the reconstruction of the temple irrespective of what they can offer but just because of who they are. Despite being Yahwists, the so-called adversaries were rejected. Ezra-Nehemiah focused on difference instead of on similarity. This is simple categorization vis-à-vis cross categorization[187]. Through dialogue, the editor of Ezra-Nehemiah conveys his exclusive ethnic theology/ideology; hence he calls people who came to offer help "adversaries" (יִרְצָם). The rejection of the "people of the land" set the tone for the rest of the reconstruction of the temple. The "people of the land" reacted to their exclusion. They engaged in social action which expressed their disapproval of their exclusion. They resorted to different strategies as the biblical story relates:

> Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build, and they bribed officials to frustrate their plan throughout the reign of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia. In the reign of Ahasuerus, in his accession year, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem (Ezra 4:4-6) … At that time the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped and was discontinued until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia (Ezra 4:24).

Grabbe (1998) comments as follows: "The opposition continued to harass the community for many years ... The nature of this harassment is a bit vague but seems to be diplomatic rather than the use of violence or force" (1998:16). Whatever the nature of the harassment, it is true that there was no solidarity between the groups. There was conflict, albeit at a diplomatic

[187] See again chapter two where simple and cross categorisation were discussed in full.

level and it was due to the exclusion of "the people of the land". Farisani (2002) explains the harassment as follows: "... the עם יראה were not merely opposed to the rebuilding of the temple, rather, they were opposed to their exclusion from the rebuilding process" (2002:127). What is important for this chapter is the result of this harassment/opposition: the reconstruction process stalled. According to the editor of Ezra-Nehemiah, the work on the house of the Lord was stopped from the time of Cyrus until the time of Darius, a period of nineteen or twenty years.[188] Due to an exclusive identity formation process (and an exclusive ethnic theology/ideology), the reconstruction process was retarded.

3.2 Chronicles

Lundquist (2000) correctly remarks that "Israel had made the *transition* from a chiefdom to the state, in political terms, and needed all the accoutrements of state polity. Chief among these was a great national temple, to be built in the national, holy city" (2000:1282). Meyers (1996) describes the temple as a "monumental public work marking the transition from tribal league to nation-state" (1996, ABD electronic version). The fact that Israel during the time of David-Solomon was undergoing transition from one system of governance to another, makes this period relevant for our discussion on reconstruction. During transition identity formation is a social phenomenon to reckon with, contributing either positively or negatively to the transition process. In Israel worship was being reconstructed from a decentralized system of worship to a centralized one. The temple therefore, was a project of this reconstruction process. Of utmost interest for this discussion is the type of identity formation that informed this reconstruction project, namely, the temple construction.

In chapter five there was a discussion on 2 Chronicles 2:11-16. In this passage, it is indicated that Solomon assembled people who were skilled because they qualified best and not because of who they were. He invited Huram who was a foreigner, a Tyrian. Solomon explains why he requests Huram when he says, "…for I know that your servants are skilled in cutting Lebanon timber. My servants will work with your servants …" (2 Chronicles 2:8-9). Even more interesting is the description of Huram-abi, who is dispatched by Huram. In this description we detect what Jonker previously (2008) highlighted, namely:

> By analyzing the direct speech person constellations, that is, who addresses whom, as well as the content of the direct speech, that is what information is conveyed in the direct speech, one could get a glimpse of what the narrator wanted to achieve with the narrative (2008:705).

[188] The laying of the foundation was started in 535 BC, the second year of their coming (Ezra 2:8). The temple was finished in, 516/5 BC the sixth year of Darius (Ezra 6:15).

Through Huram, the Chronicler introduces this Tyrian artisan as a son of a Danite woman, making him a relative of Israel. The Chronicler focuses on similarity rather than on difference. This is cross categorization vis-à-vis simple categorization. He adopts an inclusive ethnic attitude. The Chronicler set the playing field for Solomon, and the result is that Solomon is described as having reduced conflict and enhanced solidarity. The results of the approach Solomon adopted are revealed in at least two verses:

> Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord and the king's house; all that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the Lord and in his own house he *successfully accomplished* (2 Chr 7:11). Thus all the work of Solomon was accomplished from the day the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid until the house of the Lord was finished completely (2 Chr 8:16).

The inclusive ethnic theology/ideology of Solomon facilitated the reconstruction process. This *portrayal* of the Solomonic temple building by the Chronicler carried some message for the Chronicler's own time. The Chronicler's narrative is not in itself an indication of a historical reality during the time of Solomon. It is rather a *construction* of the past in order to influence the Chronicler's presence. The Chronicler probably wrote in a time when the Zerubbabel temple was already finished. He could therefore not have influenced the process of temple building by his writings. However, through his portrayal of the Solomonic temple, he probably wanted to restore the community's evaluation of the Zerubbabel temple in their own time. Because of the controversy around the rebuilding as described in Ezra-Nehemiah, the Second Temple always had a "legitimacy" problem. The Chronicler probably wanted to address this legitimacy problem by showing that it is no problem that foreigners were around during the reconstruction. That was also the case during Solomon's temple building! He also probably wanted to show that an inclusivist way of thinking about the temple can benefit the broader community's participation in temple worship, while an exclusivist stance would always place obstacles in the way of full acceptance of the sanctuary.

4 Reconstruction of Community

Also paramount was the reconstruction of the Judean people. Like the temple, this phenomenon of community spiritual reconstruction was not immune to the general conceptualization of the Judean community.[189] One of the factors which were imposing themselves on the Judean people was that the context was an international one. The Israelite

[189] Take note that the term "spiritual" is used here in the sense of the "spirit of a community", i.e., how the community perceived themselves.

nation is now portrayed as a constituent member of a world order established by God at creation. The Lord is the primary agent of history. He may choose to speak prophetically through foreign kings. He even uses nations such as Egypt and Babylon to reach His goals. This international atmosphere, in one way or another, influenced the drawing of ethnic boundaries. The Ezra-Nehemiah ethnic theology/ideology shifted the ethnic boundaries so that only the Judean exiles constituted Israel. Interaction with foreigners became a sin. Chronicles on the other hand, maintained the original borders of the twelve tribes and was more tolerant to foreigners. The spiritual reconstruction in Ezra-Nehemiah was then based on this highly exclusive ethnic theology/ideology. The spiritual reconstruction in Chronicles, on the other hand, was based on highly inclusive ethnic theology/ideology. The following discussion will assess whether the approaches of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles retarded or facilitated the spiritual reconstruction processes in the respective books. As it has already been indicated above, Ezra-Nehemiah narrates the actual events of the Second Temple period while Chronicles uses the past of Israel to address the challenges of his present generation.

4.1 Ezra-Nehemiah

In the discussion on Ezra-Nehemiah above it was stated already that obedience to the Lord was paramount and that this obedience entailed keeping pure by eschewing marriage to and even contact with "foreigners" and the "peoples of the land". This exclusive ethnic theology/ideology informed the process of reconstructing the community of "Israel" as well in Ezra-Nehemiah. It is on this basis that spiritual reconstruction in Ezra-Nehemiah took place. The editor of Ezra-Nehemiah portrays Ezra and Nehemiah as putting much effort to implement "obedience" and exerted quite intense pressure on the community to separate themselves from "foreigners".

According to the narrative, in Ezra 9:1-2, it is discovered that the "holy seed" (זֶרַע הַקֹּדֶשׁ) has contaminated itself by marrying foreign women. Ezra mourned this tragedy and prayed to the Lord apologising on behalf of the exiles (9:3-15). In Ezra 10:10-12 Ezra addressed the community about the tragedy and the community responded by vowing that they will separate themselves from the "peoples of the lands" (עַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת) and the "foreign wives" (הַנָּשִׁים הַנָּכְרִיּוֹת). Ezra had thus dealt with the practice of intermarriage between Israelites and the "people of the lands". However, in the time of Nehemiah, the intermingling between the "holy seed" and the foreigners was still taking place. In Nehemiah 6:17-19 Nehemiah reports that:

> Also in those days many letters went from the nobles of Judah to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah,[190] and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam,[191] the son of Berechiah. Moreover, they were speaking about his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him (Neh 6:17-19).

As the editor arranged the narrative, in Nehemiah 8, Ezra read the Law to the community and the Festival of Booths was celebrated. Amazingly, in Nehemiah 9, the community is again separating itself from foreigners and confessing their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors. This time they even signed the Covenant. Despite all this, in Nehemiah 13:1-3, the Law is read to the people again and when they heard the Law, "they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent" (Neh 13:3). This did not remedy the situation, for in Nehemiah 13:23-27 Nehemiah reports the interaction of some Israelites with the "foreigners". Nehemiah even had to deal violently with the people to force them to separate themselves from foreigners (Neh 13:25). The success or failure of Ezra-Nehemiah's reforms of reconstructing the community by separation from "foreigners", as presented by the editor of Ezra-Nehemiah, is assessed here against the background of Grabbe's (1998) historical reconstruction of this phenomenon in the later centuries. Grabbe's asserts:

> Judging from Jewish history over the next couple of centuries, the more extreme of the religious reforms – that is, those that isolated the community and restricted its intercourse with the surrounding peoples – were abandoned by the community as a whole, even if some continued to advocate them (Grabbe 2004:358).

The implication of the foregoing discussion is that Ezra and Nehemiah as presented in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah failed to reconstruct the community into what they wanted it to be, even in a time when they were still in control. By focussing on differences and ignoring similarities between them and non-exiles they applied *simple categorisation*. The consequence was an exclusive identity formation process which at times even led to conflict, as Nehemiah 13 reveals (cf. Nehemiah's actions as desribed in Neh 13:8 and 25). A further consequence was the retardation of their spiritual reconstruction, as the discussion demonstrated.

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[190] He was an Israelite whose descendents returned from the exile at the time of Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:5).
[191] He helped Nehemiah to repair the walls of Jerusalem (Neh 3:4).

4.2 Chronicles

In his endeavor to convince his community, the Chronicler presented the past for their present. Like the story of Solomon above, the story of King Josiah is presented as a lesson for the Second Temple community. According to Handy (2000), "Josiah came to the throne in a period of both internal and external turmoil for Judah. The assassination of Amon suggests wider unrest than mere unpopularity with this particular ruler, and the bloody reform measures engaged in by Josiah seem to confirm such discontent" (2000:741). It is the internal turmoil that interests this study. Handy's remark affirms that Josiah's reign was a period of reconstruction, which makes it relevant for our discussion on reconstruction. The story of Josiah in 2 Chronicles 34 is a retelling of a story in 2 Kings 23. However, the Chronicler makes his own amendments so that the story subtly hints at some matters that one can identify as relating to Chronistic thinking. It is these amendments that justify the use of Josiah's story to discuss the inclusive identity formation process in Chronicles, despite its origin from 2 Kings 23.

In 2 Kings 23:2, the prophets were among the people who "went up to the house of the Lord" with King Josiah who read from the book of the covenant. In 2 Chronicles 34:30 the statement is the same except that the prophets are replaced with the Levites. Van Rooy (1994) comments; saying that "in this way the Chronicler identifies the Levites of his day with the prophets of the nation's history" (1994:177). The Levites constitute one of the main themes of the Chronicler. In 2 Kings 23:19 it is reported that "Josiah removed all the shrines of the high places that were in the towns of Samaria". On the other hand, the Chronicler refers to "towns of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far as Naphtali". The insistent use of Manasseh and Ephraim when referring to the north, which one does not find in the Deuteronomistic history, forms a distinct language of the Chronicler. Not less important is the diminishing distinction between the designations of Israel and Judah towards the end of the chapter. Schweitzer (2005) correctly recognizes that "it is also significant that in the remainder of Josiah's reign the distinction between Judah and Israel seems virtually to disappear as the people again seem to be brought together under Josiah's leadership as a unity (2005:249). Of utmost importance for our discussion is the chronology of the narrative. According to 2 Kings 23:15-20, reforms in the north took place after the discovery of the book of the law and the renewal of the covenant while in 2 Chronicles 34:6-7 that all happened before. Noticing this difference in chronology, Schweitzer (2005) remarks:

> The different order of events in Chronicles allows for the northerners to contribute financially to the temple repair project, affirming their solidarity with the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chr 34:8-9) (2005:249).

Lastly, in 2 Chronicles 34:33 it is explicitly stated, unlike in 2 Kings 23, that Josiah "made all who were in Israel worship the Lord their God. All his days they did not turn away from following the Lord the God of their ancestors". These differences in the unfolding of the narrative do introduce nuances that lead to a new understanding of the things that happened.

It is the link between the inclusivity of Josiah's reforms and the consequent increase in solidarity between the north and the south that is of prime importance for this discussion. As Schweitzer has already remarked, "the temple repair project" became a joint venture of the north and the south. The people worked בֶּאֱמוּנָה (faithfully). There were no threats of conflict. The project had the blessing of all and progressed smoothly and successfully. Most important of all, Josiah "made all who were in Israel worship the Lord their God.All his days they did not turn away from following the Lord the God of their ancestors" (2 Chr 34:33). Josiah's reconstruction process was a success, according to the Chronicler. He managed to the Israelites so that they became loyal to the covenant again. The inclusive ethnic ideology/theology found in this narrative led to increased community solidarity, which in turn led to a prosperous reconstruction process. Josiah hosted the best ever Passover. There was none like it before or after him. Although this statement appears in 2 Kings 23:22, the build-up to this climax in Chronicles makes it sound afresh. Again, just as it was the case with the discussion of Solomon's construction of the temple, the Chronicler's portrayal of the Josiahnic reforms carried some message for the Chronicler's own time. This portrayal of an inclusive ethnic theology/ideology of a seventh century king was a contribution to a discourse of the fifth century community socio-historical complexes. The Chronicler was informing his contemporaries that if Josiah's inclusive ethnic theology/ideology brought about a successful community reconstruction process; it could also benefit the community reconstruction process of the Second Temple Judean community.

5 Comparison between Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles

The above discussion has affirmed the contention of the hypothesis that an exclusive identity formation process retards reconstruction and an inclusive identity formation process facilitates reconstruction. Ezra-Nehemiah has an exclusive identity formation process and

Chronicles portrays an inclusive identity formation process. In the case of the presentation of the temple in these books, it is illuminating to quote Lundquist (2000) saying:

> The phase of Solomon's temple that was rebuilt by the Jewish people returning from Babylonian Exile (known as the Second Temple) was much less grand than the original had been, due to the poverty of the people (2000:1283).

Lundquist assigns the much less grandness of the Second Temple to the poverty of the people. Had they accepted offered assistance from other Yahwists, the case would have been different. Their exclusivity retarded the rebuilding of the temple in two main aspects: duration and splendour. Solomon took seven years to build his temple (1 Kings 6:38) and the exiles took nineteen to twenty years to rebuild it. The First Temple was nevertheless much more splendid than the Second Temple. Through the prophet Haggai, the Lord had the following to say about the Second Temple:

> Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? (Haggai 2:3).

This comparison proves that the inclusive theology/ideology proposed by the Chronicler is a progressive approach that facilitates reconstruction while the exclusive theology/ideology purported by the editor of Ezra-Nehemiah is a retrogressive approach that retards reconstruction.

In the case of the reconstruction of the community we find a similar scenario as the reconstruction of worship. In Ezra-Nehemiah the exiles were forcefully separated from the rest of other people. People would now and then vow to separate from the "foreigners" but then continue to interact with them. Ezra and Nehemiah failed to achieve the kind of community they envisaged during the whole of their tenure as people in authority. Their exclusive theology/ideology retarded their reconstruction process. Some scholars argue that the "foreigners" in Ezra-Nehemiah are in fact Israelites who remained behind when others were taken as captives. Grabbe (1998) is one of the scholars who argue along these lines:

> The conclusion seems straightforward: the text simply refuses to admit that there were Jewish inhabitants of the land after the deportations under Nebuchadnezzar. Probably only a minority of the people were taken away, with the tens of thousands still left ... There is no suggestion that any foreign peoples were brought in to replace those deported. ... Instead we find references to the 'peoples of the land' who are identified as foreigners. One can only conclude that many, if not all, these 'peoples of the land' were the Jewish descendants of those who were not deported. In the eyes of the author of Ezra,

> these peoples were no longer kin; the only 'people of Israel' were those who had gone into captivity (Grabbe 1998:135).

Farisani (2002) is of the same opinion as Grabbe when he argues that:

> The words 'adversaries' or 'our enemies' וניצר and 'people of the land' עם ארץ, 'peoples of the lands' ימי תוצראה refer to the people of the land, namely the Israelites who did not go to Babylonian exile, but remained in Palestine. Throughout the text the 'adversaries' וניצר are introduced as opposing the returned exiles (2002:126).

If one follows this interpretation, it becomes clear why it was so difficult for the exiles to keep the promises they made to Ezra and Nehemiah. Ezra and Nehemiah were demolishing community solidarity that a recovering community like the Yehud community needed desperately. For this reason, they dismally failed to separate people from their relatives. Their exclusive ethnic theology/ideology retarded their reconstruction of the community.

On the other hand, King Josiah reinforced community solidarity between the south and the north. "All his days they did not turn away from following the Lord the God of their ancestors" (2 Chr 34:33). Unlike in Ezra-Nehemiah, in Chronicles, Josiah managed to reconstruct the community successfully so that during his tenure in office, people did not turn away from following the Lord. Because of his inclusive ethnic theology/ideology, Josiah hosted a Passover that was so successful that "there was none like it before or after him" (2 Chr 35:18). By this story of Josiah, the Chronicler promoted the idea that an inclusive identity formation process facilitates reconstruction. He persuasively presented this *modus operandi* as the one to be emulated.

6 Conclusion

Exclusivity is a recipe for social conflict and inclusivity is a recipe for community solidarity. Social conflict spells disaster for reconstruction while community solidarity pays off well for reconstruction. According to Tajfel (1978), self-esteem is very important for people. If a group to which they belong diminishes their self-esteem, they tend to leave such a group for the one which will enhance their self-esteem. However, if, for some reasons, it is impossible to leave the group, they engage in social actions that will change the situation so that their group enhances their self-esteem. The study adds that depending on the circumstances, such social action may lead to social conflict. In a context of reconstruction, that may only have a negative impact.

This is what happened in the case of Ezra-Nehemiah. In Ezra-Nehemiah there is an exclusive identity formation process which negatively impacted on community solidarity and consequently led to social conflict. The "people of the land" were excluded from the building of the temple. This they interpreted as an attack on their self-esteem so they engaged in social action in protest against their exclusion. This resulted in the delay of the reconstruction by nineteen to twenty years and a temple that is much less magnificent than the original one. This exclusivity also led to the failure of reconstructing the community. The people found it difficult to separate from their relatives and Ezra-Nehemiah failed to implement the covenant signed in Nehemiah 9 therefore.

However, in the case of Chronicles the situation is different. The Chronicler portrays an inclusive identity formation process which positively impacted on community solidarity and consequently enhanced it. The building of Solomon's temple involved the twelve tribes and also skilled workers from foreigners. This, definitely, the Tyrians interpreted as an acknowledgement of their skilfulness and by implication, an enhancement of their self-esteem. For this reason, they provided the best service so that their reputation was not spoilt. The result was a great and splendid temple that was finished in record time. This inclusivity also led to the success of Josiah in reconstructing the community. He held the best ever Passover and the people never turned away from following the Lord during his reign. The Chronicler managed to use the past to provide an alternative approach to the socio-historical problems of his contemporaries.

Chapter five and six confirmed the presupposition that Ezra-Nehemiah has an exclusive identity formation process and Chronicles an inclusive one. This chapter, chapter seven, indeed confirms the hypothesis of this study that an exclusive identity formation process retards reconstruction and an inclusive identity formation process facilitates reconstruction.

Chapter Eight

Summary and Conclusions

1 Introduction

This study was motivated by Mugambi's (1995, 1997, 1999, and 2003) call for an African theology of reconstruction. Its research goal was to propose a biblical paradigm for an African theology of reconstruction from the Old Testament. The study focussed on the central themes of identity formation on the one hand, and community solidarity and social conflict on the other. The study identified identity formation as a pivot of a reconstruction process of a nation undergoing a process of transition, reconciliation, reform, reconstruction, redress and transformation. The study argued that identity formation can facilitate or retard reconstruction depending on the form of the reconstruction process. A reconstruction process can either be inclusive or exclusive. An inclusive identity formation creates a conducive environment for community solidarity while an exclusive identity formation process is a recipe for social conflict. The study therefore hypothesised that an exclusive identity formation process retards reconstruction and an inclusive identity formation process facilitates reconstruction. It was the task of this study to test this hypothesis.

The theoretical background for this venture was Henry Tajfel's and Jean-Claude Deschamps' social psychological theories of social identity, the social anthropological theory of ethnicity by Frederik Barth, and the African ethic of Ubuntu. The mode of identity the study focused on was ethnicity. As part of the research design the study explored two textual corpora from the Second Temple biblical literature, namely the historiographies of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. How the presentation of the temple takes place in this literature, and how the concept of "all Israel" is used there, were used as entry points into determining the level of exclusivity and inclusivity in these corpora. Of no less importance were the two concepts of ideology and paradigm. In this study, ideology was defined as a set of ideas held by a particular group or person in a particular socio-historical setting to mould and shape the community into a particular direction. It was used interchangeably with theology in this study. Paradigm on the other hand, was defined as "something used as a model or example for other cases where a basic principle remains unchanged, though details differ" (Wright 1983:43). Against this background, the study examined different elements contributing, in their unique ways, towards the attainment of the objective of this study, that is, proposing a

biblical paradigm for the reconstruction process in (South) Africa. Below is a summary of the different elements in the order in which they appeared in the body of this study.

2 Reconstruction Theology in (South) Africa

Adding to the voice of Mugambi, Villa-Vicencio also calls for a theology of reconstruction. Both base their call on the argument that the cold war and the colonial/apartheid eras are past and the liberation struggle is over. During the time of the liberation struggle liberation theology served its purpose. Now that Africa is supposed to be occupied with reconstruction, reconstruction theology also becomes a necessity. They perceive the newly liberated Second Temple Judean community as a model of a community in transition, undergoing a reconstruction process, and from which Africa can learn some lessons. Just as the liberation movement of the Exodus provided Moses as a biblical paradigm for liberation theology, the reconstruction process of the Second Temple Judean community can provide a biblical paradigm for reconstruction theology in Africa. Specifically, they find themselves strongly attracted to the character of Nehemiah as a biblical paradigm for a reconstruction process in Africa.

This call for a theology of reconstruction has been met with varying responses. Farisani (2002) accepts the idea of an African theology of reconstruction but rejects Nehemiah as a biblical paradigm. Vellem (2007), on the other hand, argues that the kind of public theology proposed by Villa-Vicencio is methodologically not within the framework of liberation theology or at least Black Theology. He is not against the proposition of a theology of reconstruction, but he argues that Villa-Vicencio's proposal needs to be reformulated as a proposal for a particular kind of political theology so that the underlying ideological ramifications can be unveiled. He is also not comfortable with the rejection of the Exodus as a biblical paradigm by Mugambi. His argument is that, taking into account that there is already an African theological paradigm in existence, any attempt to develop one that fails to take into cognizance dialogues within African theologies deprives the new paradigm that is envisaged of credibility. Vellem posits that reconstruction, development, nation-building, transformation, reconciliation, moral regeneration all are moments that can be harnessed by liberation to turn Black Theology of liberation into a constructive paradigm of engagement in public life. Another respondent is Maluleke. In one of his articles (1994b) he claims that his chief informants on a theology of reconstruction are Villa-Vicencio, Gous and Peterson (footnote 11, 1994b:248). He concludes this article with five questions and then sums up by

declaring that from a black and African perspective the proposal for a theology of reconstruction, *in lieu of*, and even alongside of black and African theologies of liberation, is misplaced and unacceptable. He further rejoins to the charge that theologies of liberation tend to be "negative" and uncreative by stating that the notion of reconstruction emanates from South Africa's political reform project in general, and from ANC circles in particular and for that reason a 'theology of reconstruction' is itself not necessarily a creative project (1994b:256). His main critique of both Villa-Vicencio and Mugambi, however, is the rendering of the inculturation-liberation paradigm redundant and the assumption that the end of the 'cold war' has immediate significance for ordinary Africans and that the so-called 'New World Order' is truly 'new' and truly 'orderly' for Africans (1997:23). These statements are interpreted by the study as an outright rejection of the proposal for a theology of reconstruction.

This takes us to the question of the relevance of liberation theology in the post-colonial/apartheid era. The study reserved its response to this question until this phase of the dissertation and it is one of the two issues that were not discussed in the body of this dissertation.[192] The study affirms that the democratic elections of 1994 marked a turn in the history of South Africa. A democratically elected government consisting of leaders from the oppressed masses took over. South Africa became politically liberated. However, the study also acknowledges that the majority of the population remains poor. This is because liberation takes place in phases. In fact, the adoption of a two-stage theory of liberation by the South African Communist Party (SACP), an alliance partner of the governing African National Congress (ANC), was an acknowledgement long before 1994 that political liberation alone cannot fully liberate the masses. It was recognition that even after political liberation, the liberation struggle will have to continue for economic freedom. Besides economic oppression, there are other structural oppressions some sectors of society need to be liberated from. Gender inequality is still rife despite the fact that some women occupy higher positions of authority in society. The physically challenged people, the so-called disabled people, do not get equal opportunities as their counterparts. Rural areas do not get equal attention as the urban areas. All these challenges need a voice to represent them. Under these circumstances, liberation theology is still relevant in the post-colonial/apartheid era. The study therefore is of the opinion that liberation theology is absolutely necessary in post-1994 South Africa.

[192] The other one is the proposed biblical paradigm for a reconstruction theology in (South) Africa. That will be presented towards the end of this chapter.

Having said this, the study is very much concerned about the change in the identity landscape that comes along with a new dispensation. New identity groups emerge and some of the old identity groups evolve or drift to the margins of social activity. In some instances previous enemies become friends and previous friends become enemies. An emergence of a new social group, evolution of old social groups or drifting to the margins of some groups might also mean an emergence of new interests, evolution of old interests or drifting to the margins of some interests. For example, the so-called tenderpreneurs are a new identity group that adds complications to the identity landscape. The point is that identity becomes a much more complex process than it has been before. Some of the issues that were taken for granted before suddenly become contentious. The environment within which theology operates, changes dramatically. It is under these circumstances that the study sees a necessity for a theology of reconstruction alongside liberation theology. Having identified identity as a crucial condition in a transitional phase, this study has focused on the dynamics of processes of identity formation in order to come to a better understanding thereof. Describing identity, Dyck (1994) says: "In fact, identity turns out to be a very complex notion indeed, playing host to ideologies and practices which distort at one level the very values which are affirmed at another" (1994:212). Specifically, the series of steps, actions or operations employed to attain a particular identity form, which the study calls *identity formation*, and the effect thereof on reconstruction, was the subject matter of this study. The study therefore, proposes a theology of reconstruction that takes cognisance of identity formation processes and their effect on reconstruction.

3 Social Identity, Ubuntu and Ethnicity

Because the study identified identity formation as the central theme for a theology of reconstruction, we need to examine the process itself. Significant about identity formation is that it can either facilitate or retard reconstruction. It involves what is known as social categorisation. Social categorisation is a process whereby people in a given population categorise themselves according to social groups with particular interests and strive to secure their interests within the broader community. Social categorisation can take any of its two forms which then mould identity formation. One is simple categorisation and the other is crossed categorisation. Simple categorisation, on the one hand, employs discriminatory strategies to survive. Groups discriminate against each other and there is high potential of social conflict. Crossed categorisation, on the other hand, employs tolerant strategies and has

a diminishing effect on social conflict. The study hypothesised that social conflict retards reconstruction and community solidarity facilitates reconstruction. The diminishing effect on social conflict also enhances community solidarity. The study argues that reconstruction thrives better in a context of community solidarity rather than in a context of social conflict.

Because of its discriminatory character, simple categorisation leads to exclusive identity formation and ultimately to social conflict. Cross categorisation leads to inclusive identity formation and consequently to community solidarity. Social conflict is regarded by this study a negative force and therefore the kind of identity produced by an exclusive identity formation process is negative identity. Due to its accommodative nature, inclusive identity formation produces accommodative identity. The study denounced negative identity and set out to promote accommodative identity. However, accommodation also needs to be moulded so that it can serve the interests of reconstruction best. The point being made here is that people can accommodate each other but with condescension. Reconstruction can be served best by accommodation without condescension. Let we demonstrate this point with an example. The study makes a difference between justice as equal access to goods and opportunities on the hand, and equality of respect, on the other hand. Women who occupy formerly male positions of authority in society, but when they come home or to other social gatherings, must remember their status as junior social partners, enjoy justice with condescension. They are accommodated but with condescension. The study is convinced that accommodation, whose matrix is that principle of Ubuntu that says a person is a person through other people, can be without condescension. That principle of Ubuntu instills a sense of equality of respect. In other words it perceives a person as able to exist because the other also exists. For that reason, an accommodative kind of identity moulded by Ubuntu is a complementary identity. The study concluded that the kind of identity that can serve reconstruction best is a complementary identity.

Up to this point the discussion about identity had been general and the study therefore chose ethnicity as an identity mode that it can use to present its arguments. Ethnicity is a legitimate distinction; however there are things that need to be borne in mind about it. The study maintains that ethnicity can operate in a way that facilitates reconstruction as much as it can retard reconstruction, under certain circumstances. Ethnicity is a social construct and not a given, original, fixed and permanent entity. Some of those who argue that ethnicity is a given, original, fixed and permanent entity also insist that ethnic similarity leads to cooperation and ethnic difference leads to interethnic conflict. The present study does not agree with this

perception. Ethnicity primarily operates with ethnic borders that widen and become narrow according to the dictates of the circumstances. The interests of influential people in an ethnic group determine the narrowing and the widening of the ethnic borders as well as their penetrability in many instances. These people can lead towards an interethnic conflict when that suits their interests, but also maintain peace when that benefits them. In other words, ethnic formation can produce negative identity culminating in social conflict, as well as accommodative identity resulting in community solidarity. The study suggests that this phenomenon needs to be monitored and guided so that it produces complementary identity. The study furthermore concludes that emphasis on cross categorisation can produce inclusive ethnic formation that will in turn enhance chances of community solidarity. Community solidarity is an atmosphere in which reconstruction can thrive best.

In order to test this assertion, the study explored two Second Temple historiographies, namely, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. It focused on whether the concepts of "all Israel" and the temple were used exclusively or inclusively in these books.

4 Identity Formation in Ezra-Nehemiah

The purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah has been established by the present study as to instill holiness in the community and this holiness is tantamount to separation from the "peoples of the land". One of the presuppositions of this study was that Ezra-Nehemiah contains an exclusive ethnic ideology/theology. Because Ezra-Nehemiah's purpose was to create a "holy community", the study concludes that the holiness purpose of Ezra-Nehemiah is ideological.

In chapter three it was argued that for an ideology to be effective, it needs to manifest itself in different spheres of a community's life. It needs to manifest itself in the community institutions, in literature, in the spoken language, in the members' behavior etc. Ezra-Nehemiah's holiness as an ideology is no exception. It manifested itself in different spheres of the community from which this literature originates. The use of the concept of "all Israel" and the presentation of the temple as a community institution were therefore investigated in order to test the mentioned presupposition.

It was proven from two angles that the concept of "all Israel" reinforced the exclusive ethnic ideology of Ezra-Nehemiah. Firstly, it was established that when Ezra-Nehemiah refers to "all Israel", it refers to Judah and Benjamin and the Levites from the Babylonian exile. Secondly, this concept was used alongside the twelve-tribe theme and attached the meaning

to this theme that it also refers to Judah and Benjamin and the Levites from the Babylonian exile.

The study furthermore examined the temple as a community institution by analyzing Ezra 4:1-3 and Nehemiah 13:4-9. In both instances it was established that the temple was used to exclude those who were not Babylonian exiles. The study concluded that Ezra-Nehemiah indeed contains an exclusive ethnic ideology and therefore Ezra-Nehemiah's identity formation process is exclusive.

5 Identity Formation in Chronicles

In chapter three it was established that the main purpose of Chronicles was to unify his divided community. The study presupposed that Chronicles contains an inclusive ethnic ideology/theology. In the same manner as in the previous section, the concept of "all Israel" and the presentation of the temple were investigated. The study found that in Chronicles, the concept of "all Israel" refers to both the ten tribes of the northern kingdom and the two tribes of the southern kingdom (Judah and Benjamin). When used in conjunction with the twelve-tribe theme, the concept refers to the twelve tribes of Israel. In the same vein the way in which the temple features in Chronicles was examined. In relation to the temple, the study established two aspects: Firstly, the temple in Chronicles accommodates all of the twelve tribes. Secondly, the temple in Chronicles accommodates other ethnic groups beyond the ethnic borders of Israel. The study therefore concluded that Chronicles indeed contains an inclusive ethnic ideology/theology and therefore reflection of an inclusive identity formation process.

6 The Impact of an Identity Formation Process on a Reconstruction Process

When we explore identity formation processes in these biblical books it is important to keep in mind what Tajfel said. According to Tajfel (1978), group membership that follows upon the "recognition of identity in socially defined terms" bears consequences. If one's group does not enhance his/her self-image/esteem, s/he will tend to leave it. However, if it is impossible to leave it, s/he will accept the situation for what it is and engage in social action which will lead to desirable changes for the situation. The present study perceived such social action as having potential for social conflict.

When the Judeans returned from exile they were faced with two challenges: they firstly had to reconstruct their community, and secondly, had to redefine their identity. As it was indicated above, there were many voices on these issues in the postexilic era of reconstruction. The kind of identity formation had a significant bearing on the reconstruction process. It was therefore important to investigate the effect of identity formation on reconstruction reflected in the two chosen books from this postexilic era.

In terms of the reconstruction of worship it is indicated in Ezra-Nehemiah that the temple reconstruction stalled for nineteen or twenty years. This was because they refused to allow some Yahwists to take part in the reconstruction and so the excluded people took action and the project stopped. Even after it was finished, the Second Temple suffered illegitimacy among some Yahwists. In Chronicles, the situation is the opposite. Solomon involved all twelve tribes including foreign Tyrians. For that he received the best skills and high commitment from the workers. Solomon's temple was finished in record time. It was big, splendid, and enjoyed wide legitimacy.

With reference to the reconstruction of the community the situation is similar. Ezra-Nehemiah's reforms were exclusive. The reformers struggled to make the community "holy" from the time of the finishing of the temple until the end of the narrative. Community members would make oaths that they would separate themselves from the foreigners, only to revert to the same behaviour at a later stage. This continued until Nehemiah's tenure. Reconstruction of the community in Ezra-Nehemiah failed. In Chronicles the situation is again the opposite. Josiah's reforms were inclusive. Solidarity increased between the north and the south. The people worked בֶּאֱמוּנָה (faithfully). Most important of all, Josiah "made all who were in Israel worship the Lord their God. All his days they did not turn away from following the Lord the God of their ancestors" (2 Chr 34:33). Josiah's reconstruction of the community was a success. Although these narratives in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles might not be an exact account of what happened in the postexilic phase of reconstruction, the author(s)/editor(s) behind these books designed them according to their own ideological/theological beliefs in order to convey a message to their audiences. The messages conveyed by these books present the post-1994 communities in (South) Africa with clear indications as to what route to follow when engaged in a process of reconstruction

7 Conclusion

The two books demonstrated clearly that ethnicity is socially engineered. In Ezra-Nehemiah Israel was seen as two tribes while in Chronicles it consists of twelve tribes. These books also indicated that in a newly liberated community identity formation becomes crucial. In the cases reflected in these historiographies it is particularly ethnic formation which was at stake. In the case of Ezra-Nehemiah, we conclude together with Esler (2003):

> From our point of view, therefore, Ezra's attitude reflects a concern that a symbolical boundary between Israel and other ethnic groups had been breached in a manner which threatened his people's very identity. The boundary must be reinstated and there is a straightforward if draconian means to achieve this end – divorce of foreign wives and child abandonment *en masse*, a measure which only four of the people oppose (Ezra 10:16) (2003:421).

The relationship between the mode of identity formation and the mode of reconstruction became very clear in these books. Ezra-Nehemiah emphasized simple categorization which produced negative identity. The result was an exclusive ethnic formation process which led to social conflict. The ultimate price was the retardation of the reconstruction process. Chronicles, on the other hand, emphasized cross categorization which produced accommodative identity. The result was an inclusive ethnic formation process which led to community solidarity. The outcome was the positive facilitation of the reconstruction process.

Coming to Mugambi's proposal of Nehemiah as a biblical paradigm for a theology of reconstruction in Africa, the study disagrees.[193] The study is aware that the Chronicler is not perfect. He was part of the ruling and priestly classes in Jerusalem (Dyck 1994:162). He was probably the instigator of an "empty-land ideology/theology" (2 Chr 36:21). Despite that, the Chronicler's inclusive ethnic ideology/theology which reflects an accommodative process of identity formation, and which facilitates community solidarity, can potentially promote the cause of reconstruction in (South) Africa. The study therefore proposes the book of Chronicles as a biblical paradigm for a theology of reconstruction in (South) Africa.

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